NEW MASSES

MAY 3, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

THE GREAT DEBATE:

Which Way to Peace?

The Line-Up of Forces in the Anti-War Movement

By Marguerite Young

Across the Ebro

A Cable from Spain

By Joseph North

Labor Prepares for the Polls

What Labor's Non-Partisan League Has Learned

By Bruce Minton

The World's Fair to Date

By Joseph Starobin

The Blind Men of Transport House

By R. Palme Dutt

Don't Save a Place!

By Robert Forsythe

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BETWEEN OURSELVES

MARGUERITE YOUNG'S article on the peace movement indicates the importance of the debate which we have arranged for Wednesday evening, May 4, at Madison Square Garden, between Earl Browder and Frederick J. Libby. The importance of Mr. Libby's position in the whole anti-war situation makes him a logical opponent for the general secretary of the Communist Party. The views he expresses on international affairs are clearly in direct conflict with the Communist position on how to prevent a new world war. The debate should provide a rich intellectual treat and will be a political occasion of first importance. We advise our readers to come early. The debate begins at 8, and the fire department has a habit of closing the doors promptly when Madison Square Garden is filled.

Next week's issue will contain our monthly literary section—a special number devoted to Federal Writers' Project work. More than twenty writers are represented, including Richard Wright, author of the just-published *Uncle Tom's Children,* whose new novella, *Bright and Morning Star,* appears in full. Special guest editors for this issue are Sol Funaroff and Willard Maas, who have been able to enlist the coöperation of the Federal Writers' Project and many state administrations.

In forthcoming issues:

A survey of the political battle-lines now forming around the NEW Deal recovery program, analyzing the causes of the defensive position in which the progressive forces in Congress have been forced, and the deeper issues involved, by A. B. Magil.

A first-hand account of wrecking in the Soviet Union, by John Sutton, an American chemist, recently returned after six and a half years work there.

Two articles on the Communist Party, by Ruth McKenney, giving in unconventional terms an outline of the way the organization works.

The situation among the lawyers, what the Lawyers' Guild is doing and what it means to the legal profession, by Charles Recht.

"Liberal Arts and the Marginal Life," by Harris Moaier Fisher, a closely-observed study of the university teacher.

The next lecture in the "Crux of the News" series by NEW MASSES editors will be given by Marguerite Young on "Behind the scenes in Washington." Miss Young was formerly with the Washington bureau of the Associated Press. For several years she was Washington correspondent of the *Daily Worker.* She has been associated with NEW MASSES since the beginning of the weekly. She is now at work on a book covering the Washington scene. The lecture will be held on Wednesday, May 11, at the Roger Smith, 40 East 41st St., New York City.

A reader from the West Coast sends us the rebate on a discontinued subscription to the New York *Post,* and sends with it a letter from the editor of that paper in reply to his own letter, which criticized the recent policies of the *Post* and asked that his subscription be canceled. The *Post* editor concludes his letter with the following: ". . . we have had . . . personal congratulations from Mr. Norman Thomas for our position on Communism and isolation."

"She Always Wanted Shoes," a short story by Don Ludlow which appeared in NEW MASSES September 14, 1937 will be reprinted in *Best Short Stories of 1938,* edited by William J. O'Brien and published by the Houghton, Mifflin Co.

"In the article 'Harvard Goes to Hicks' in NEW MASSES of April 26," writes Winthrop Praed, "I made a regrettable slip. I wrote the name Marion Anderson, one letter away from that of Marian Anderson, the celebrated Negro singer, when I actually meant Jane Anderson, the notorious Marquesa Cienfuegos, world's greatest woman orator and propagandist for Franco."

Georgia Burke, Duke Ellington, the Juanita Hall Choir, Rex Ingram, Arthur Wilson, Frank Wilson, and "Filibuster," a satiric ballet directed by Anna Sokolow, will be featured in "The Bourbons Got the Blues," by Carlton Moss and Dorothy Hailpern, which will be presented by the National Negro Congress, on Sunday evening, May 8, at the Mecca Auditorium, 133 W. 55 St., New York City.

What's What

IMPORTANT NOTE: the *place* of the Los Angeles NEW MASSES Ball has been changed. It will be held Friday evening, May 6, as originally scheduled, but at the Rancho Country Club, 10100 West Pico Blvd., and *not* at the Riverside Breakfast Club. Alfred O'Malley, our West Coast representative, says arrangements were abruptly canceled by the Breakfast Club on an hour's notice. At 4 p.m. on April 20, he writes, more than two weeks before the event, the club phoned and demanded the *full rental* by the close of business that day, on pain of cancellation. This was the first intimation he had received, Mr. O'Malley says, that full rental would be demanded so far in advance, and there had been no previous suggestion from the club that everything was not proceeding satisfactorily. Mr. O'Malley protested the short notice, and said he would try to have the full rental in an hour, but would surely have it by next morning. He wired our New York office, and money was sent. When he came home from dinner he found a telegram of cancellation. When he appeared at the club next morning prepared to pay the full rental, Mr. Carmona, of the club, told him there was no use discussing the matter, as the cancellation was final. At first, according to Mr. O'Malley, Carmona said he planned to let some other organization have the club; then when Mr. O'Malley insisted that the NEW MASSES ball be held as scheduled, he said he had already given the club to another organization for that night. When asked what organization it was, he replied, "a banking group." He refused, however, to divulge its name. "There is something very fishy about the whole affair," Mr. O'Malley concludes. "I have never heard of business people operating on such a basis, and I do not believe that next morning when I appeared to pay the full rental—still more than two weeks ahead of time—the place had been let to any other group. But if this is a trick on someone's part to prevent a NEW MASSES Ball in Los Angeles, it won't work. The Rancho Country Club is a lovely place, and easily accessible to those who don't own automobiles, since it's right on the Pico car and bus lines." Full details of the affair are given in the ad on page 25.

Who's Who

R. PALME DUTT, one of the leading British Marxist theorists, is editor of the *Labor Monthly* and the author of *Fascism and Social Revolution* and *World Politics: 1918-36.* . . . Joseph North is *Daily Worker* correspondent in Spain. . . . Joseph Starobin, who has appeared in NEW MASSES before, is editor of the *Young Communist Review.* . . . Roy Powell is in the biology department of an Eastern university. . . . Rolfe Humphries recently received a Guggenheim fellowship in poetry. He has frequently contributed verse and criticism to NEW MASSES and recently aided in the editing of the anthology of Spanish loyalist poetry, *And Spain Sings.* . . . Nathaniel Buchwald is on the staff of the Jewish *Morning Freiheit.*

Flashbacks

OF the first celebration of May Day as an international labor holiday (1890) Friedrich Engels wrote, "The proletariat of Europe and America is mobilized for the first time as one army, under one flag, and fighting for one immediate aim: an eight-hour working day, established by legal enactment." . . . Four years later in 1894 General Coxey chose May Day as the day on which to lead his unemployed army into Washington to petition Congress for public works. . . . May 3 marks the second anniversary of the election which brought the French Popular Front Government to power. . . . One of the fastest edge-trimmers among the thousands of Massachusetts shoe workers, and a fish peddler —both union organizers and radicals —were arrested May 5, 1920, at a time of great anti-Red hysteria and charged with a payroll murder. The Names: Nicolla Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti.

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Two weeks' notice is required for change of address. Notification direct to us rather than to the post office will give the best results.

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NEW MASSES
MAY 3, 1938

The Great Debate: Which Way to Peace?

By Marguerite Young

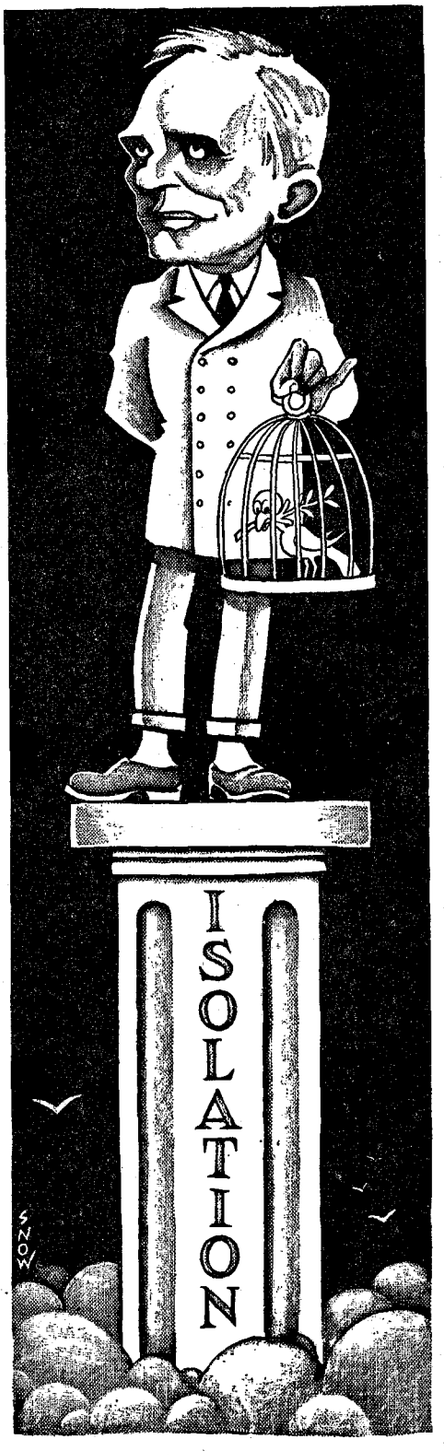
WASHINGTON.

MORE controversial yet more alive and consequential than ever before, the American peace movement finally has ceased hovering like a timidly discreet bit-player at the wings, and has swept boldly into a major role in the center of the Washington stage. It now speaks deeply dissonant lines. Yet it musters a volume and evokes responses, both among officialdom here and from the people beyond, which were undreamed of in the old days of upstage harmony.

Ten, eight, even six years ago, politicians and press met peace issues chiefly in the persons of several professional advocates, Washington spokesmen for anti-war agencies.

There was Frederick J. Libby. This dynamic Quaker, once spiritual adviser at Phillips Exeter College, had been a Quaker Relief Commissioner in war-ravaged Europe. He called his National Council for Prevention of War "David eyeing Goliath," because it perched bustling but scorned in a dank old house facing the ponderous headquarters of the State and War Departments whose imperial armaments it hoped one day to destroy. There was Clark Eichelberger. He had left Northwestern University to go to France as a private, and his stout young vigor in promoting international political coöperation contrasted oddly with the stuffed-shirtish respectability of his League of Nations Association. There was Dorothy Detzer, a charming Indianan, youngest and ablest of pacifists. Miss Detzer had lost a brother in the war, and she pressed the aims of her Women's International League for Peace and Freedom with a persistence most annoying to Coolidge and Hoover politicians.

Year after year in those times Washington received—and politely ignored—many sections of the broad American peace movement. Women's organizations, church and youth groups, would hold conventions and pass peace, or disarmament, or anti-tariff, or anti-imperialist resolutions. Occasionally Bill Green's American Federation of Labor leaders would put in their two cents for peace—as would the oldtime big-farmers' champions. Speaking generally, all of these wanted not merely peace, but peace with social progress and an end of force in human affairs. Specifically, they desired a motley, contradictory collection of things. And since their chief distinction was their capacity to agree to disagree, unitedly they asked little and got less. But among them there reigned the utmost coöperative cordiality.



Snow

Frederick J. Libby

"Solitudinum faciunt, pacem appellant." (They make solitude which they call peace.)
—*Tacitus, Rome, 56 A.D.*

Today—go into any office on Capitol Hill or the downtown executive branches, and the first word you hear likely will concern some specific peace question. The politician will probably be very busy trying to figure just who and what, in terms of votes, may be behind a stack of telegrams on his desk or a delegation of people who just visited him, or a telephone call he has just received. How to line up on *specific aspects* of *peace in relation to other elements of progress and reaction* is the politician's chief headache. For the American peace movement has attained an organizational strength, a drive, a political consciousness no office holder dare play with—though it is split wide open. Hence, Washington ears ring with a crossfire of directly opposite demands. The dividing line, cutting not only between organizations but also and more often right through each organization's membership, is the question: Shall the United States join in concerted action against the fascist states? Focus of the conflict is the crux of the most dramatic and historic debate America has engaged in for many decades—the present Neutrality Act which weights its penalties heavily against the victim in armed struggles now going on between democratic and fascist nations.

The spectacular unfinished roles played by opposing sections of the American peace movement in relation to neutrality during this session of Congress reflect the whole recent years' development of the nation's anti-war forces and figures. They are roles such as couldn't have been believed possible a few years ago. And, curiously, the same factors that gave the peace movement the capacity to do this also explain the cleavage in it.

Manchuria — Ethiopia — Spain—Austria—again, China. The names of these fields of fascist-democratic conflict epitomize the changing world situation that in recent years has given the question of war and peace a new centrality and immediacy among social questions, and a new concreteness. This has forced the peace movement more and more to recognize the relationship of peace to every other social question. Besides, recent years have seen the rise of several new and big mass organizations whose starting point was peace *and* democratic progress—particularly, the American League for Peace and Democracy. Simultaneously, American labor and youth, mobilizing in their own formations and showing unprecedented strength and militancy, have put concrete peace *and* progress demands on their agenda.

What gave them unity, articulateness, force,

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was the American League. It did not merely put individuals in its leadership; it marshaled delegates from union ranks for national congresses, threshed out the question concretely, and sent the labor delegates back to make the working masses more conscious and more active against war and reaction. At its last congress delegates were present representing organizations with a membership of 4,500,000, of whom 1,600,000 were unionists.

THE NATURAL RESULT of all this has been a profound shifting and churning within the whole peace movement. There has gone on—and it is not yet finished—a process too complex to detail here. Its most significant trends, however, happen to be typified in the changing pursuits and allies of the Libby-Eichelberger-Detzer trio.

Miss Detzer has occupied a very progressive position among the professional peace leaders. The W.I.L., older than most, was born amidst the actualities of the World War. From the first it recognized the inseparability of peace and social justice, and fought big business' interference with civil rights at home, as well as its war-making influence.

Always conscious of the need of mass support and broadest organizational unity, Miss Detzer also took a leading part in the formulation of the National Peace Conference. In this group about forty organizations united several years ago. They included every major peace group except the young, growing American League. That organization was excluded because the N.P.C. majority, against a stiff opposition led by Miss Detzer, refused to cooperate with any group having the participation of Communists. Miss Detzer promptly joined the League, embracing its anti-fascist as well as its anti-war program, while remaining active in the N.P.C.

A leader of the anti-Communist section of the N.P.C. was Libby. Once he too had championed recognition of the U.S.S.R. That had been used by the War and Navy Departments' intelligence-service men in an effort to smear Libby as a radical and decrease his anti-armaments influence. Nothing could have been more fantastic. Libby consistently had refused to notice domestic violence and repression. I remember his objection to calling for disarmament of the Ford police in the Dearborn massacre. That, said Libby, was not his job.

Eichelberger also had a leading part in the N.P.C. He directed its national campaign for world economic coöperation, which preceded the national conference it held recently in Washington. The conference was to arrive at a program which everybody, in and outside the N.P.C., could agree on, a sort of highest common denominator for American peace forces.

But the N.P.C. had already begun to divide into blocs around the neutrality issue. Eichelberger had formed a Committee for Concerted Peace Efforts, composed of individual leaders of groups outside the N.P.C., such as the American League and the National Youth Congress, as well as N.P.C. people who wanted to revise neutrality. Libby had joined the Keep Us Out of War Committee—a group of individuals also including a number from organizations in the pro-neutrality bloc within the N.P.C., plus outsiders, a committee notable for its anti-Communist stand and for the leading role played in it by Trotskyite- and Lovestoneite-influenced individuals like Norman Thomas and Homer Martin.

The N.P.C.'s Washington conference received an experts' report on the subject of international economic coöperation. The report asked a tough question: how was this economic-coöperation principle to be applied? Was it going to mean feeding coöperation to the fascist nations, who would utilize their thus increased strength for further aggression? Would it be this kind of economic coöperation together with continued American political isolation, giving encouragement to the fascist disturbers of political security? Or would it be world economic coöperation with abandonment of political isolation in favor of world political *and* economic coöperation, against the fascists? The experts recommended both kinds of democratic coöperation. There followed a bitter debate. Libby attacked Eichelberger for allowing the question to come up. Warming up to his pro-neutrality theme, he suggested Roosevelt ought to be impeached for failing to apply the act in the Sino-Japanese struggle. A strictly isolationist substitute for the experts' report was finally rejected by a vote of 101 to 96.

Since that conference, the pro-neutrality bloc has tended to adhere even more solidly to the Keep Us Out of War Committee, and the pro-revision faction more compactly to the Committee for Concerted Peace Action. Libby and Eichelberger stand at the poles, leading figures in today's two major peace camps. Meanwhile Miss Detzer, having indignantly withdrawn from the American League in opposition to its pro-revision position, has lined up with the Keep Us Out of War Committee. Though her sympathy undoubtedly is with democratic Spain and with swallowed Austria, though she bitterly denies being an isolationist and wants "international coöperation" for peace and freedom, she has spent the better part of this year writing attacks on concerted political action—"collective suicide" she labels it—and lobbying against revision of neutrality.

The whole Keep Us Out of War Committee, trying to get out from under the reactionary implications of refusing to throw America's lot in with all the democracies, has decked its program with "increasing solidarity with the peoples of all nations in the worldwide struggle to abolish economic injustice and colonial repression," and with popular domestic features like "a program of construction, conservation, and expanded education."

An outstanding contention these people raise against concerted action is that it would mean coöperation with the imperialists like Tory Prime Minister Chamberlain — something which, of course, no collective-security advocate looks for, since the latter's whole object is to break up Chamberlain's key support of the fascist aggressors and bring England to the side of threatened democratic nations.

The collective-security advocates insist that isolationism and neutrality inevitably mean supporting Chamberlain and the fascists in action and eventually in principle. If you want to hear this demonstrated, just listen, as I did, to the Keep Us Out of War Committee's leading light—Libby.

The National Council for Prevention of War formally espouses a more equal division of the earth and its resources—among nations. I asked Libby why he, responsive to international injustice, does so little to help labor get justice in this country. He said that wasn't his job.

Then how did he expect to get labor's cooperation for peace? Well, he helped them stall off civil-liberties restrictions like the recent Sedition Bill proposals. Besides, labor wants peace and so will have to coöperate.

Mr. Libby began to talk about the Treaty of Versailles and what has happened since, including Manchuria, Spain, Austria, China, with such placid acceptance that I suddenly asked whether these things didn't shock him. He blandly replied that they had to happen, and as for Austria, he was a little relieved that it was over.

"Good heavens, you sound just like Tory Chamberlain!"

"I do admire Chamberlain," he said. He told me that one of his friendly allies is always accusing him of admiring Hitler. I was not too startled—I knew that one of Libby's chief aides privately had expressed warm admiration for the Führer. I told him that, and asked him how he felt about Hitler. He shied, but, pressed, gave me the following considered opinion:

"In a period of European history in which the so-called democracies have been stupid in diplomacy, Mussolini and Hitler have timed their moves so well they have taken the leadership of Europe away from nations which are still actually more powerful."

"All right, but does your Christian conscience consider that good or bad for mankind?"

"Wait a minute," he said. "Nobody can tell what the outcome will be. In the struggle for power it makes very little difference which nations are on top today, because they may not be tomorrow. The historical map of Europe is a very interesting study."

"But this seizure of leadership—or, shall we say, the fascist offensive—is it a menace?"

"To me," Libby observed resignedly, "Hitler is an incident . . ."

Again I said, "A good or a bad incident?"

"It depends on the outcome, how he uses his power."

"So it seems you cannot yet judge the results already effected!"

Mr. Libby conceded only a tentative amendment: "Of course, I abhor the persecution of Jews and the exaltation of force."

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The Blind Men of Transport House

By R. Palme Dutt

LONDON, April 14.

IN this hour of crisis labor has issued a pronouncement.

Spain is fighting single-handed the supreme battle for the cause of democracy all over the world—a battle in which even the slightest material aid from this country would turn the scales.

In France the future of the people is imperiled by the pressure of British reaction on French internal politics.

Britain has signed the pact with Mussolini, which places the power of Britain on the side of the fascist alliance and tips the balance for fascist world-war.

Universal popular opinion is indignant and alarmed. On all sides throughout the labor movement, and on the widest democratic front, the feeling is expressed that a stand must be made, that common action must be taken to defeat Chamberlain and his alliance with fascism, and to save Spain and peace. Stirred by the urgency of the hour, the leader of the Labor Party, together with prominent members of the Labor Party Executive and trade-union leaders have joined hands with the leaders of liberalism and representatives of a broad democratic front in order to call an all-inclusive national conference of support for Spain, on April 23.

At this point Transport House, headquarters of the Labor Party, has at last moved. Faced with the universal demand to furnish a lead, the chiefs of Transport House, basing themselves on the dwindling majority in the Labor Party Executive, have given their lead. That lead is to say *no*. On all the urgent issues of the crisis they are silent. They have no plan to save Spain, no plea to defeat Chamberlain and the alliance with fascism. Of one thing only they are certain. There must be no united working-class front. There must be no popular front. There must be no democratic front. There must be no peace front. That is the supreme expression of their leadership in this hour of crisis.

Translated into plain terms, that leadership means: "Chamberlain must rule."

"Independence" of the labor movement is the watchword under which the right-wing opponents of unity defend their stand against any democratic peace front to defeat Chamberlain.

What a mockery that these advocates of class-collaboration should now present themselves as the defenders of the "independence" of the working class.

Was it "independence" to swing behind the "National" government in regard to its lying League professions about Abyssinia in 1935 and proclaim Sir Samuel Hoare the "voice of Britain"?

Was it "independence" to tail behind the "National" government's criminal "non-intervention" policy for fourteen months and help to strangle Spanish democracy?

Was it "independence" when Citrine and the general council obediently responded to Chamberlain's call for coöperation at Downing Street on March 23, and thereby helped to save Chamberlain at the moment when his government was shaking, and enabled him to defeat the revolt of his own supporters because he could claim that he had the cooperation of labor?

The reality behind this mock slogan of "independence" is—*dependence on Chamberlain*. They are so anxious to be *independent* of the possible *allies* with whose aid they could defeat Chamberlain that they end up by being dependent on the real enemy, the representative of the main forces of finance-capital, Chamberlain.

The real independence of the labor movement consists precisely in leading and uniting all forces for the defeat of the main enemy and representative of finance-capital, the "National" government.

"Socialism" is solemnly proclaimed by these right-wing opponents of unity to be the aim in whose name they oppose any united democratic front which would not include Socialism in its objects.

This may sound very "left," but what does it mean in practice? It means that no sincere democratic fighter, no opponent of fascism, no supporter of a collective peace policy is to be allowed to unite in the common fight, unless he will also swallow the principles of "Socialism" as laid down by the Labor Party. This means, in fact, thrusting away millions of willing allies, and handing them over to the "National" front. Once again, the reality of the policy is to *help Chamberlain*.

The *Daily Herald* taunts the Communist Party because in the program of the Communist crusade for the people the aim of Socialism is not included as an immediate object of the common fight.

Precisely because we are serious about the fight for Socialism we do not play with it as an empty word behind which to hide passivity and shirking from the real, immediate issues of the present struggle.

In order to reach the goal of Socialism, a great deal has to be done first. We have no hesitation in declaring that the immediate issue of the fight at this moment is not Socialism. The immediate issue is to defeat the "National" government, to win the fight of Spanish democracy, to defeat fascism and its war-offensive, to win the fight for democracy and peace and the rights of the working-class movement, so as to create the conditions for advancing to the fight for Socialism.

The Spanish people are fighting and dying, not for Socialism as the immediate common aim, but for the Spanish Republic. If the working-class parties had separated themselves to insist on Socialism as the program of the fight against fascism, they would have smashed any common front, and Franco would long ago have conquered in Spain.

The serious fighter for Socialism is he who faces the realities of the present fight, and refuses to take refuge in empty words to cover practical support of reaction.

Again, "defeatism" is charged by the *Daily Herald* against those who advocate a united working-class front and democratic front to defeat Chamberlain. They declare that the Labor Party can win on its own without allies on the left or the right.

The real defeatism is exactly this policy. For this policy means, in reality, to be completely unconcerned about the urgency of defeating Chamberlain in the present crisis, and to be content to continue as a permanent opposition, peacefully awaiting a hypothetical future majority, in whose possibility the leaders themselves privately have no confidence.

It is just because we are seriously concerned with defeating Chamberlain that we demand that the Labor Party organize the unity of the working class and win all potential allies in the common fight, in order to ensure speedy victory in the present crisis.

The realization of working-class unity, and of unity between the working class and other elements of the democratic front, would not only combine existing forces, but would at once bring millions of the unorganized into the trade unions and the Labor Party, and rally millions of those at present apathetic, as the example of France has shown.

That is why the policy of unity is the policy of victory. The refusal of unity is the real defeatism.

The manifesto of Transport House does not represent the real feelings and wishes of the labor movement. But in it we can see sure evidence of the strength of the rising tide for unity.

We need to redouble our efforts to make the April 23 conference an overwhelming success, whose representative character will show beyond question the wishes of the popular forces in this country and will constitute a first triumph of unity overriding the opposition of reaction.

We need to press forward the preparations for a United May Day that will constitute a landmark in the history of the labor movement.

The future is not with the blind men of Transport House. The future is with working-class unity and with the united labor and democratic front which alone can win victory over the "National" government, save peace, and defeat fascism.

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Across the Ebro

By Joseph North

BARCELONA, April 25 (By Cable).

THE Ebro is Spain's Mississippi River. In a land of dry river beds it swirls along angrily, eddying in a thousand bends. It is particularly deep this time of year due to melting snows of mountain country. That is no help to Mussolini, for the fascists must cross the river; and Father Ebro protects his Spanish children better than the stoutest fortress.

Two armies, two systems of thought, of life, face each other across the river. I was at the republican parapet in Tortosa this week and looked at the fascists across the stream. I heard some Italians yell across, "How do you like Italian cannon?" and the Spaniards reply, "Not bad, but tell us, what are Italian men like?" Discussions of this sort always close with bursts from machine guns.

I spent a full day near the banks of the Ebro with Modesto, commander of the armies' southern "agrupacion" of the east—that means the armies of Catalonia. Till his promotion he had been head of the Fifth Army Corps, the bravest of an army of brave men. Del Vayo singled this corps out for special mention in an address before the world press recently. It includes internationals. It helped Catalans put up the defense that headed off Aranda's march on Barcelona, bogging him down at Lerida and Balaguer.

Modesto talked tanks, plans, material. He also talked of infantry. He liked American tanks best, and French heavy artillery. But, he said, tanks will soon be as outmoded as dodoes. The anti-tank gun has spelled its doom. He scoffed at the efficacy of the Italian whippet tanks, as did Antonio Cordon two weeks ago when I interviewed him at Lerida, before he was named head of the army of the land. Modesto grinned: "Tanks get outmoded, doughboys never." Of course, Modesto said, when the enemy lays down its heavy artillery on a narrow sector and rains three or four hundred tons of steel on a thousand-kilometer line per hour, it isn't comfortable. And then add the airplane, but still these aren't decisive. "Men tell the tale of war," he said, "not cannon. As soon as the rest of the world sends us enough cannon"—he looked at me, American, and at my colleague, French—"our vastly superior infantry will roll them back."

Modesto, like his men, is a son of the people, at work since the age of nine. He looks forty but is actually thirty-one. The best fighting direction comes from those who a few years ago were active trade-unionists, organizing the masses.

Modesto had military training in Africa, where he learned to hate the Monarchy. When he left the army he joined the U.G.T. "I used to fight for the united front within the trade-union movement," he said. "Today we fight with guns for a united Spain." He showed me his wounds—a six-inch gash down his thigh, a shattered hand. He had a couple of hours off and wanted us to stay through supper. He showed me a picture of his wife, a Madrileno, and their two kids. I showed him a picture of my family. "Guappas." He said that means handsome in Spanish. "America," he said, "is O. K." That's one American word all Spaniards know. He also liked the American tanks that can go sixty miles an hour. "If we are using tanks, I'd like to use American tanks." I told him, as I've been telling all Spaniards and internationals for the past month, that public opinion in America is for loyalist Spain, that Congress is beginning to reflect the popular will. He wanted to know if it is true that Roosevelt is friendly toward the Spanish people.

We ate supper by candlelight, because the electricity kept flickering off and on. My French colleague had found a copy of Dante in the Italian library of the mansion which once belonged to a rich Rovinial fascist, and was reading about the descent to Hell. "Like Tortosa." He said Modesto liked the way he read poetry. "Italian sounds nice. It's a shame that Mussolini talks it." He said, "I want the book autographed for a Frenchman who got a piece of explosive bullet in his hand the other day when we were at the front lines at Tortosa." Modesto autographed it to "the hero in horn-rimmed spectacles." He asked us to come around soon again "with cannon and planes, please."

Nissur

"Ah—Rebels!"

Actually, the military scene here is much improved. It is as Negrín said the other day: "If we resist we shall get arms." More arms are coming in but not enough human material although more men are entering the service, more fighters and more "fortificadores." For as Spain fortifies, it plans also to train. Reserves are a critical necessity when the Republic goes on the defensive.

Guerrilla warfare is spreading, particularly in the North where the Republic has begun to make important advances, regaining towns the Italians must have in order to get to Puigcerda to close the pass to France. The legions of "pico y palo" (pick and shovel) are doing their work all along the roadways. I saw hundreds on my way down to Tortosa, marching with their humble yet vital weapons.

In the other regions of republican Spain, that is in all but the Catalonian area, General Miaja and Jesus Hernandez, newly appointed government commissar for that area, toured the southeastern coastal area, the Valencia-Segunto-Castellon area. Everywhere they went cheering crowds closed in on them, demanding speeches of Miaja. The soldier told them bluntly that he expects and knows they'll defend their territory as the Madrilenos defended the capital. He said that everywhere he went, order reigned, and there was complete endorsement of the reorganized government. Castellon mobilized all men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five for military service whether at the front or at the rearguard.

The Spanish press made much of the national conference to aid Spain, held in London. The London *Times* was quoted as saying, "It is impossible to forecast the final result of the Spanish war." The press here made much of that, for last week-end the European press had written Spain's death-warrant—"prematurely, as usual," the Spanish press said dryly.

The happenings in Asia get a big play here and the Spanish people rejoice in China's victories as though they were their own. And in a very real sense they are. The war has made the formerly insulated Andulusian or Castilian or Catalan internationally minded.

Intellectual Spain launched a manifesto reiterating its faith in victory, hailed events in China, and urged all progressives the world over to help the Spanish and Chinese people, "for the triumph of democratic principles is indispensable to the advancement of human culture." Finally, President LeBrun's welcome to the new Spanish Ambassador, expressing amity and admiration for loyalist Spain, touched the Spanish people. They knew that reverberations would be felt in Rome and Berlin immediately. Sunday in Barcelona was brilliant. The drums were beating. The Italians were in Valderrobres on the highway to the sea. Yes, it was not so long ago that the Spanish horizon was closed by snow-peaked Pyrenees; today the Spanish people feel that their nation is the center of the world. They are molding the future and they know it.

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Battle Lines Forming

THE lines are forming on President Roosevelt's recovery program. The coalition of tory Republicans and Democrats who defeated the Reorganization Bill are preparing for another kill. But since this is an election year, the strategy must be varied. First, a barrage is being laid down against the whole principle of federal spending. Behind this barrage plans are being made for a flank attack designed to amend all New Deal proposals in order to tie the hands of the administration in the allocation of funds and begin the shifting of the relief burden from the federal government to the states and communities. This is the aim of the bill introduced by Representative Bacon of New York, which while ostensibly providing the same W.P.A. appropriation that Roosevelt requested, $1,250,000,000, would require the states to match one-third of this sum and would place the administration of the whole fund in the hands of the states.

On the other side the forces are also moving into position. The President's program has already evoked an unprecedented response from the labor movement. Union after union, A. F. of L. as well as C.I.O., has communicated its endorsement. Most encouraging of all is the fact that on this question, as on the new Wages and Hours Bill, the two wings of the labor movement have dropped their differences and adopted a common stand, with the A. F. of L., the C.I.O., the Railway Brotherhoods, and Labor's Non-Partisan League all officially giving their support to the program. Nor does labor stand alone. Despite the floods of anti-New Deal propaganda directed at the farmers and small-business people, it is significant that the National Farmers' Union, one of the three big farm organizations of the country, and many small-businessmen's groups have also declared their approval of the recovery program.

Behind the struggle over the spending and lending proposals lie deeper issues. Walter Lippmann, in the New York *Herald Tribune* of April 21, calls on Congress to refuse to vote any kind of a spending program until President Roosevelt has made concessions on the tax question, has capitulated to the utilities, and yielded to the demands of big business for emasculation of the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Lippmann thus demonstrates that the reactionaries are fully aware of the implications of Roosevelt's efforts to relieve suffering and stem the economic crisis, and are determined to stop him if they can. Progressives may well learn a similar wisdom in the present emergency. Carping criticism of the inadequacy of the recovery program—and that it is inadequate is certainly true—can only serve to weaken and confuse the progressives in face of the concerted drive of Wall Street's congressional coalition. That drive is intended not merely to undermine the recovery program, but to prepare the way for a reactionary victory in the elections.

Unity on May Day

MORE than ever, May Day in 1938 expresses the need for unity in the struggle to preserve democracy against reaction. Unity of the anti-fascist nations throughout the world; unity of the American labor movement; unity among workers, farmers, progressives, middle-class people who would prevent war; political unity in support of President Roosevelt's recovery program and a democratic front in the elections. May Day has always been dedicated to the solidarity of those who hate oppression, to those who would make a better world. May Day in 1938 is a mobilization in preparation for the crucial struggles that confront progressives everywhere.

There is much to celebrate—the heroism of the Spanish people, the Chinese nation's resistance to invasion, the swift progress of Socialism in the Soviet Union and the uprooting of Trotskyist wreckers and spies. There is much to guard against—the war drive of Germany, Italy, and Japan, the pro-fascist policy of the British tories, the strengthening of the rightist enemies of the People's Front in France, the coalition of reactionaries in our own nation.

May Day is more than a celebration of victories and progress, more than a commemoration of the past. It is a pledge for the future, a pledge for concerted action against war, a pledge of aid to the oppressed of the world, a pledge of winning unity of labor and its allies on the economic, political, and cultural fronts. In New York, more than one thousand delegates representing over 750,000 people in 622 trade unions, mass organizations, and peace societies plan to march on April 30. In all sections of the country, unions new to May Day demonstrations have voted participation. The Socialist Party in a number of large cities has declared its adherence. May Day in 1938 is the answer to reaction—the answer of unified resistance and augmented strength.

Professor Keeney Wins

THERE was no question of Professor Philip O. Keeney's qualifications when he was dismissed last year from his teaching and librarian position at the University of Montana. Admittedly, Professor Keeney had fallen into the more serious sin of resisting orders censoring the library, and had offended the university authorities by organizing the Teachers' Union.

The State Board of Education approved his dismissal. The board pointed out that Professor Keeney need only give up his union work and all would be forgiven. But not only did the professor refuse to retreat, but he appealed to and won the support of the Teachers' Union, the League of American Writers, and the American Civil Liberties Union. All of which only proved embarrassing to the college authorities and showed that Keeney was a troublemaker.

Recently, the district court of Montana ordered Keeney reinstated. The university will appeal the judgment. But the decision has already vindicated Professor Keeney. More than that, it has shown what can be accomplished even against a board of education, a president of a state university, and the governor of the state combined, by the concerted action of progressive labor groups and their allies fighting in defense of cultural traditions and academic freedom.

Socialist Party Convention

IT is doubtful whether the convention of any established political party could have attracted so little attention as did that of the Socialist Party, held in Kenosha, Wis., April 21-23. Four years ago, when the Socialist Party at its Detroit convention emerged from the post-war doldrums and showed signs of becoming a constructive factor in American political life, the event rated considerable space in both the capitalist and labor press. This year it will probably be news to most of our readers—or the readers of any other publication—that what was once *the* party of the American working class has just held its national convention.

The decline of the Socialist Party is highly instructive. After striking out toward the left and ridding itself of the reactionary Red-baiting Old Guard that had been in the saddle since the war, the Socialist Party

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in 1936 went into reverse. Rejecting the united-front offers of the Communists, it admitted the Trotskyites *en masse* into its ranks. From that moment its fate was sealed. Though the party was subsequently compelled to eject the Trotskyites, it continued, under the leadership of Norman Thomas, to be strongly influenced by Trotskyism. Its disastrous 1936 election campaign, when it concentrated its fire on Roosevelt, was followed by increasingly virulent attacks on the Soviet Union and on the People's Front in Spain and other countries, by flirtations with anti-C.I.O. elements, and by the adoption of an isolationist position on foreign policy. As a result, thousands of members and sympathizers were alienated so that today the actual national membership of the Socialist Party is about three thousand, the lowest in its entire history. Compare this with the 75,000 members of the Communist Party, which, incidentally, will record new gains when its national convention opens in New York, May 26.

The Kenosha convention ignored an appeal signed by Mrs. Meta Berger, widow of Victor Berger, and a number of prominent Wisconsin Socialists, urging that the party abandon its present ruinous course. The convention demonstrated that the Socialist leaders have learned nothing from the past when it adopted an "anti-war" resolution which declared that "Roosevelt liberalism, like Wisconsin liberalism, is a prelude to war, part of a system to charm the workers by a few concessions to lay down their lives for capitalism."

This resolution, directing its main attack not against the fascist aggressors, but against the New Deal, is apparently to be the platform of the so-called Keep America Out of War Congress which the Socialist Party is organizing in Washington, May 28-30. A congress conceived in this spirit cannot serve the cause of peace. And a party which echoes the Vandenbergs and Hamilton Fishes cannot play a progressive role unless its members repudiate the counsels of those who seem to have drunk a bit too deeply at the poisonous springs of Trotskyism.

A Bad Compromise

IN the compromise which the Senate and House conferees finally effected on the undistributed-profits and capital-gains taxes, big business has won important concessions. The proposals, summed up, amount to this:

Undistributed-Profits Tax—Under the present law, all corporations, in addition to a normal tax of 8 to 15 percent, pay a 7 to 27 percent tax on undistributed profits. The Senate-House compromise places a flat normal tax of 16½ percent on corporations earning more than $25,000 a year, plus a 2½ percent surtax on undivided profits. It also gives exemptions from the undistributed-profits tax by permitting the carrying over of losses from the previous year and the deduction of sums used for the retirement of debts contracted before January 1, 1938.

Capital-Gains Tax—The present law taxes capital gains 100 percent if the stock is held for one year or less, 80 percent if held for more than one and less than two years, 60 percent if held for more than two and less than five years, 40 percent if held for more than five and less than ten years, and 30 percent if held for more than ten years. Under the Senate-House compromise, profits from the sale of assets held for eighteen months or less will be taxed as ordinary income. Assets held more than eighteen months and less than two years will bear a maximum tax of 20 percent, and a maximum of 15 percent if held for a longer period.

The proposals of the Senate and House conferees retain, it is true, the principle of the undistributed-profits tax, which the reactionaries have sought to kill entirely. But that principle has been reduced to hardly more than a shadow. And the revision of the capital-gains tax ignores the plea made by President Roosevelt, in his letter to the chairmen of the Senate and House committees, that "there is no fairness in taxing the salaried man and the merchant upon their incomes and taxing at far lower rates the profits on the capital of the speculator."

At a time when the economic crisis necessitates increased expenditures for the relief of the needy, the Wall Street corporations should be compelled to bear a greater and not a smaller share of the tax burden. If the liberals in Congress have the will, it is still possible to amend the proposals of the Senate and House conferees in the spirit of the President's letter.

Nazi Previews

A PREVIEW of the tragedy which the fascists are preparing for America was given the other evening in New York, when a thousand Nazis armed with blackjacks attacked a group of American Legionnaires who protested against the glorification of Hitler. Another ugly incident of the forthcoming drama was the brutal attack on the crippled editor of an anti-Nazi magazine, who was beaten senseless and ink-smeared with the swastika symbol. These things are happening in "isolated" America at the same time that the Nazis prepare to burn all the "non-Aryan" books in Vienna's famous library, and the Nazis in Czechoslovakia launch new anti-Semitic outbursts. And there are still people who believe it can't happen here, and who refuse to see that the only way to prevent it from happening is to unite all progressive forces everywhere against it.

Trotsky Volunteers

THE doubting Thomases who still harp on the "incredibility" of the crimes to which Trotsky's allies in the U.S.S.R. confessed should read the political pronouncements of the maestro himself. Thus in the April issue of Professor Dewey's *Social Frontier,* Leon Trotsky declares unequivocally that *"A political revolution in the U.S.S.R. is inevitable."* A product of bitterness, frustration, and wishful thinking, this declaration is less a prophecy than a hope, despite the fact that it is proffered as a bit of political prognostication based on impeccable scientific analysis.

Naturally, Mr. Trotsky is not content with mere wish-prophecy. A man of resolution and action, this would-be Marxist is set, not only on understanding the world, but also on changing it. "Of course I am ready to participate in such a struggle of liberation," he stated in an interview published in *Ken.* The overthrow of the Soviet government is apparently not enough; Trotsky craves the honor of active participation in such an overthrow.

A new orientation? Not in the least. Trotsky has had the same hopes and intentions for quite a number of years now. He was more reticent when his "revolution" was still in

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the conspiratorial phase. While engaged with Zinoviev, Radek, Bukharin, Tukhachevsky, and the various fascist powers and their agents in plotting a "palace coup" in the U.S.S.R., he naturally was careful not to divulge too much in his public utterances. Then it was either secrecy or disaster. Now, however, that the conspiracy has been exposed and the last hope for a "palace coup" has been smashed, Trotsky is making a final effort at "revolution" by publicizing his wish-prophecies, in the hope (the *vain* hope, we are certain) of gaining popular support.

His Main Enemy! the People

PEOPLE who fail to understand how a onetime revolutionist degenerates into an accomplice of fascism should stop to probe the meaning of the word "revolution" as used by Trotsky in the *Social Frontier*. What it means to Trotsky subjectively is, in the last analysis, of little moment. Its objective meaning becomes clear when the sentence in which it appears is viewed in the light of the international situation: the Berlin-Tokyo-Rome anti-Soviet axis; the endeavors of Neville Chamberlain to form in Europe a four-power anti-Soviet Holy Alliance; the fascist aggressions in Ethiopia, Spain, China, Austria, and now Czechoslovakia. Let there be the slightest suggestion that the Soviet government is tottering, and the U.S.S.R. would become the immediate prey of all the predatory imperialist-fascist powers who have been waiting for just such an opportunity all these long, lean years. The workers' and peasants' republic would be torn into shreds, and the light of Socialism would go out of the world for who knows how many decades. . . . Whatever it may mean to Trotsky subjectively, his "revolution," objectively, is nothing but counter-revolution and the triumph of fascism.

This becomes even clearer when one reads in *Ken* Trotsky's incredible remarks about Spain: "Should the [Spanish] workers and peasants see the treachery of the Negrín government and rise up against it, I should be glad to lend them what support I can. If the P.O.U.M. and the Anarchists, now underground, should ask me to lead them, I should go to Spain tomorrow!"

Trotsky's main enemy is the Negrín government. As to Franco, Mussolini, and Hitler, he even "forgets" to mention them in his burst of "revolutionary" ardor.

Japan's Woes

LARGE Japanese reinforcements rushed to the southern Shantung front have succeeded in lifting the siege of Yihsien and in capturing Lini. Three Japanese columns are advancing on the vital east-west Lung-Hai Railway and the greatest battle of the nine-months' war is believed imminent. Though the Chinese counter-offensive has thus been brought to a halt, the Chinese position remains strong and the defending armies are maneuvering more skillfully than ever before. Even the capture of Suchow, at the junction of the Lung-Hai and Tientsin-Pukow railways, would still leave the invaders in an extremely precarious situation, with their forces and communications under constant attack by the Chinese.

Meanwhile, the difficulties at home continue to mount with each mile that the Japanese penetrate into the Chinese interior. The New York *Times* has for the second time reported a serious shortage in Japan of basic raw materials. A concerted economic embargo by the leading democracies could at this juncture bring the Japanese war machine to a halt in short order.

A Record of Achievement

THE International Workers' Order has come a long way since its organization eight years ago. At the fraternal order's fourth convention last week in Pittsburgh, a membership of 141,364 was reported, as against a total of 67,439 only three years ago. These figures are impressive, and so are the other statistics presented to the convention. For one thing, the I.W.O. has paid out, in benefits to its worker-members, a total of $1,894,729 in eight years.

But the figures showing rapid and solid growth are most important as an accurate reflection of the organization's policies. The I.W.O. has kept step with the most progressive tendencies in the United States, and has grown and is growing with these progressive forces. Among the 700 delegates to the Pittsburgh convention were seventy-seven from American Federation of Labor unions, and 226 from C.I.O. groups. And on the program for the future adopted by the convention are the most advanced legislative proposals for social security, for preserving peace through concerted action, for opposing fascism at every step.

Browder vs. Libby

THE first fruit of the British-Italian pact is the new Nazi threat to Czechoslovakia. The technique of the Austrian "Anschluss" is being brought into play again: the Nazis within Czechoslovakia, organized in the Sudeten German Party, make increasingly provocative demands in the name of national "liberation," the Hitler press in Germany backs up these demands and warns of dire consequences if they are not accepted in full, and once more the stage is being set for a sudden coup—with the connivance of Italy and Britain—designed to dismember Czechoslovakia and convert what is left into an appendage of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis. The Vienna *Reichspost,* in fact, puts it bluntly when it announces that "the hour of reckoning has come" and predicts that the present state of Czechoslovakia will not last another year.

All of which adds a touch of wormwood to the jubilant toasts that almost the entire American press has been drinking to the British-Italian deal as an act of European "stabilization" and "peace." Walter Lippmann, for example, finds that Italy has now moved out of the camp of the aggressors (apparently the Italian troops in Spain have with a stroke of the pen ceased to exist), a view that is echoed by the New York *Times,* which only a few short months ago was campaigning for what it professed to be collective security. The liberal, isolationist New York *Post,* which has repeatedly scolded Chamberlain and the French government for truckling to the fascist dictators, also finds that the new pact "is not a treaty which violates international morality," and that it will "serve to preserve peace in Europe."

The ultimate pro-fascist logic of the isolationist position is best exemplified by Frederick J. Libby, executive secretary of the National Council for the Prevention of War. Libby, a Quaker who has devoted a lifetime to crusading against war, has today become little more than an apologist for the fascist aggressors. In her article in this issue of NEW MASSES, Marguerite Young reveals Libby's extremely tolerant—to put it mildly—attitude toward Hitler and his admiration for Chamberlain. The general public will have an opportunity to hear Libby defend these views in his Madison Square Garden debate with Earl Browder on May 4, which is being held under NEW MASSES auspices.

Let there be no illusions about the British-Italian pact. This is not in any sense a blow at Hitler (the British are already negotiating with the Nazis for a similar agreement), but the culmination of the first phase of the British tory efforts to create a new war alliance with the fascist dictatorships. This policy is a threat to every democratic capitalist country, to the Soviet Union, and to the peace and security of the United States. For our own protection, President Roosevelt should immediately lift the embargo against the Spanish government and set the wheels in motion to revise the unneutral Neutrality Act which now makes the United States the accomplice and dupe of the most dangerous enemies of the American people.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Don't Save a Place

THE highways are full of little creatures who are happy because they can at last pass as intelligent human beings. They have become realists. There is something about the sound of the word which comforts the little folk. In the secrecy of their souls they have always had a sense of inferiority. They have realized that other people looked on them as something less than mastodonically cultured. Men who read books and discussed ideas always had their scorn, but the scorn was hidden under a wave of jocularity. If they talked at all of important matters, they were careful to throw in a few wisecracks to show that they could handle things of such nature without being swamped by them.

But now things are ripe for them. Last week I had dinner with a man who fills the description above. He had taken on new stature. He spoke with decision and certainty.

"The finest thing that has happened in years," he said oracularly. "It's not that I like the English, but you have to give them credit. They're realists."

He said this in a way which had something poetic about it, as though he might be about to cross himself. In some strange fashion he had acquired an air of tolerance which was entirely foreign to him. That he could have reached this state of satisfaction after one action by Neville Chamberlain was startling, but it was plain that his life had been altered. His next remark was even more significant.

"Forsythe," he said in a kindly tone, "why do you keep on wasting your time with that radical stuff? It's played out. Why don't you get on the bandwagon?"

Now, this requires explanation, for my friend had not been speaking in such terms even three months ago. At that time he was always careful to point out that he agreed with me on social objectives, but of course not in the way I would have them brought about. Things were upset, yes; and something had to be done. . . . Changes were necessary, etc., but the Communists were going too far too fast.

But he was now a realist.

"Those theories of yours about war," he went on. "Pretty well blown up now by that action of Chamberlain's. Probably the finest thing in that line in our time. A realistic policy."

I won't go into the discussion that followed; you will know the arguments on both sides, for they are current now. The essential thing is that my friend seems to represent a great body of thinking. With all the eagerness of drowning men, they have seized upon a plot originated by the pro-fascist Chamberlain and adopted it as a world policy.

"Why shouldn't Hitler have taken Austria?" he demanded in the most righteous and realistic tone. "The Austrians are really Germans. The Czechoslovakians? Well, why not? If there are Germans there, why shouldn't they join up with Hitler if it pleases them? What's wrong with it?"

Before you accuse me of inventing this, I ask you to talk among your own friends. You will find a new and special kind of defeatism abroad in the land. You will find men who have overnight become fervent Americans—all based on the hope that Mussolini and Hitler can be bought off; all determined that the United States is safe now that realism has come into the world. Naturally it's a form of rationalization, but it is an immediate and real thing.

The plain truth is that the world, the liberal world filled with isolationists and "realists," has developed a yellow streak a yard wide. The bandwagon boys are having their innings. "You've lost in Spain," they say. "Why keep up the foolish fighting? You can't do anything about it. You're losing on every front. That radical stuff of yours is old-fashioned. It's passed its peak. Why don't you get wise to yourself?"

At about this point it strikes me that this is an excellent time for all men of guts to stand up and fight. Quitting now is too damned simple; the wrong people are doing it. We're going to hear a lot about realism and rational thinking in the months to come. It's the new international alibi which covers all sins. Morality and decency and honesty have become old-fashioned. It is too bad that Chamberlain and the British tories have agreed to the murder of Spain, but that is merely the rationalistic policy which Great Britain has always followed. And pretty slick, too. Always thinking about the main objective, as we should be doing. In short, if a thug breaks into your house, the thing to do is make an immediate deal with him whereby he may kidnap your daughter, provided he does not run away with the silver. Be realistic. It is all very well to have ideals, but we must look out first for number one.

It gives me no comfort to point out that I was predicting the policy of the British ruling class years ago, identically as it has turned out. The sad thing is that the trend toward fascism in England, which was apparent to any thinking man, will have exactly the contrary effect to what is expected by the new race of yellow-bellies. Instead of preventing war it will bring it on inevitably. The theory that by building up international murderers, an era of peace may be obtained is so fantastic that future historians will be unable to believe that such thinking was once accounted "realistic."

As Mike Gold was pointing out last week in discussing the same series of events, there was once a Valley Forge in another revolutionary movement. The soldiers of Washington trudged about in the snow, with blood flowing from their bare feet. In New York the Tories were celebrating victory. The "realistic" policy then would have been one of either surrender or compromise. The British were at heart nice people; the quarrel had merely been a family squabble; the sensible thing to do was acknowledge error and give up such nonsense as trying to buck the British Empire.

But the revolutionary Americans refused to give up; just as revolutionaries throughout the world will laugh to scorn any notion that free man will bend the neck willingly to fascism. What is life worth on such terms? Who cares to be a well-fed worm in such an order of society?

What we will see presently is another reshuffling of the characters on the stage of life. The weak sisters will go back to their holes and hide; an equal number of individuals will awake to find that they have been Storm Troopers at heart from the beginning. They will regard the burning of the books in the Vienna library as a matter of simple realism, secretly not having liked books much anyhow. And, suddenly, they will find themselves saying: "Books by a lot of Jews, anyhow, probably."

When they have said "Jew," they will have solved everything. It is the short-cut word to erudition. Anything that can't be answered otherwise, will respond to the cry of *Jew!* It is resounding throughout America, just as it has swept Europe. We are supposed to quail before the dread word; we are expected to get on the bandwagon which is driven by such muckers and murderers. Thank you, no, my friends! Life isn't so long or so sweet that it amounts to that much. Let us just go on being idealists and visionaries. When your sons are fighting the wars of fascism which your realistic policies have made so inevitable, think not of us but of those men who have fought in Spain and who are fighting in China and who are dying in the dungeons of every fascist country so that a decent world may be preserved—even for you, you realistic cowards, you smug, careful, good citizens, you sweet lovers of terror if the terror is aimed at somebody but yourself. Get on the bandwagon quickly! And don't save a place for us. It's very nice of you to think of us, but don't save a place. We are very much afraid we should suffocate from the stinking odor of death as we went along. Don't save a place.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

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Labor Prepares for the Polls

By Bruce Minton

"ALL state federations of labor, city central bodies, and local organizations affiliated with the American Federation of Labor [are instructed] to withdraw from association with Labor's Non-Partisan League." Thus read the order of the A. F. of L. executive council to all its affiliates April 2, 1938.

The edict was correctly appraised as a further attempt by the executive council to impede a broad political movement in which the Committee for Industrial Organization plays an important part. But it was more than that: it was the instinctive reaction of men whose training and background have schooled them to resist change. Samuel Gompers, in 1886, enunciated principles which these men have accepted as gospel. And Gompers ruled out labor's participation in independent political action—just such action as Labor's Non-Partisan League proposed. That was sufficient to set Green and the rest of the Federation's royal family against it.

Despite the council's opposition, not a single A. F. of L. official who supported the League or held office in the League resigned or in any way modified his adherence. No state or local federation withdrew. The order was a dud.

THE SUDDEN SPREAD of unionization during 1936 spurred employers to fight with even greater frenzy the growing power of the young unions. The industrialists and bankers did not confine their efforts to economic resistance. They filled their mines, factories, and mills with spies; they inundated the state legislatures and Congress with lobbyists whose function it was to persuade politicians to enact laws that would cripple the unions; they berated President Roosevelt and his New Deal for the mild concessions made to labor. And the American Liberty League scared its adherents with prophecies of doom if Roosevelt were re-elected.

To help combat the onslaught of the Liberty League, the progressive labor forces in both A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions, under the leadership of John L. Lewis, Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and George L. Berry, president of the printing-pressmen's union, tentatively set up a committee known as Labor's Non-Partisan League, with the aim of rallying organized labor to aid Roosevelt in his campaign for a second term. The initiators of the League wrote to officials of national and international unions (A. F. of L., C.I.O., and Railway Brotherhoods), requesting the co-operation of their organizations in mustering labor support for the President. Their 35,000 letters brought a response 90 percent favorable. State leagues were formed, state chairmen appointed or elected, and a month later, a national conference was held by delegates from all forty-eight states, with the industrial states the most active. While no precise measure can be made of the Non-Partisan League's role in achieving the November landslide, it played an undeniably decisive part in mobilizing the vote of labor and its allies.

The organization of Labor's Non-Partisan League to combat reaction was an almost unprecedented step for the American labor movement to take. Gompers, formerly president of the powerful craft-union of cigar-makers, had a fear of government hostility to labor that grew out of his past experience with state and federal interference in strikes—interference exercised either through the courts or through police and militia attacks on strikers and their picket lines. Assuming that the American labor movement was "exceptional," Gompers concluded that class antagonisms between labor and capital did not exist. In other words, both workers and owners, supposedly equal under the law, had the same fundamental interests at heart, and politically their goals were the same. So, reasoned Gompers, why pick quarrels with the big boys, why not bargain with them, collaborate with them, convince them that we are all one big family? And why, he asked, get the government down on the labor movement by attempting to play an advanced political role? Why not avoid politics, except for occasionally supporting labor's friends at the polls and punishing labor's enemies—always, of course, within the two-party system? Labor should pursue only "pure and simple" economic ends, and let government be the concern of politicians.

The policy that Gompers decided on in 1886, which was good enough for him for the rest of his very long life and reign over the A. F. of L., proved good enough for the majority of the moguls who carried on after him. Certainly William Green had no dispute with the tradition. The mere fact that things didn't work out the way Gompers expected them to could hardly stir the majority of the A. F. of L. executive council into countenancing a change of basic policy. But with the repudiation of Gompersism by the new C.I.O. unions, with the active desire to spread unionization to the mass-production industries (the Federation bigwigs believed that rubber, steel, glass, aluminum, and most other basic industries were unorganizable), the old idea of shunning independent politics waned. Labor's Non-Partisan League's campaign against the Liberty League shook the tradition. Labor's Non-Partisan League's development after the election shattered it completely.

THERE WERE those among the organizers of the League who felt that with the successful culmination of the presidential campaign, the League should disband. To the everlasting credit of John L. Lewis (though by the end of 1936 he was not yet fully certain that independent political action was desirable for the labor movement) and of other leaders who reflected the growing demand within the unions for an independent voice in politics, the League organization was maintained, at least in skeleton form. Only in a few states did it spread into counties and towns. It remained, for the most part, inactive; to be sure, the League supported a broad legislative program, but it did little to assure its adoption.

On the other hand, the Liberty Leaguers had no intention of admitting defeat. Their candidate for President had been permanently retired to Kansas; but their spokesmen in Congress and in state legislatures had lost neither their voices nor their voting strength. The Supreme Court continued to strike out any legislation sent up by the New Dealers. And it was the necessity of preserving the victory won at the polls in 1936 that brought Labor's Non-Partisan League back into active political life.

Faced with reaction's political power, the League learned its first great lesson: it was insufficient to reëlect the President or even to pledge support to his progressive program. More was needed. If the labor movement was not to be crippled by the political maneuvers of its enemies, labor and the progressives must obtain favorable legislation—and see to it that this legislation was enforced. To ensure this end, labor must gain some control in high political places—which meant that labor must enter politics as an independent entity. By the time the 1937 municipal elections had arrived, Labor's Non-Partisan League was in the field, a vigorous campaigner in key cities and towns. Through these campaigns, the League gained experience that has since molded it into an instrument for independent political action whose role promises to be a decisive one in 1938 and 1940.

What the League learned in the Pittsburgh area: The steel and coal towns of western Pennsylvania had long been fiefs of the great companies. Political life in this region consisted of the corporations naming candidates whom they considered reliable servants of their interests and then seeing that these candidates were elected. There was no such thing as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of press, fair trial, protection of the rights of workers or of the small middle-class people in Aliquippa, Ambridge, Duquesne, Tarentum, Clairton, or in the other industrial communities. The Non-Partisan League broke the stranglehold. It elected burgesses, councilmen, members of the

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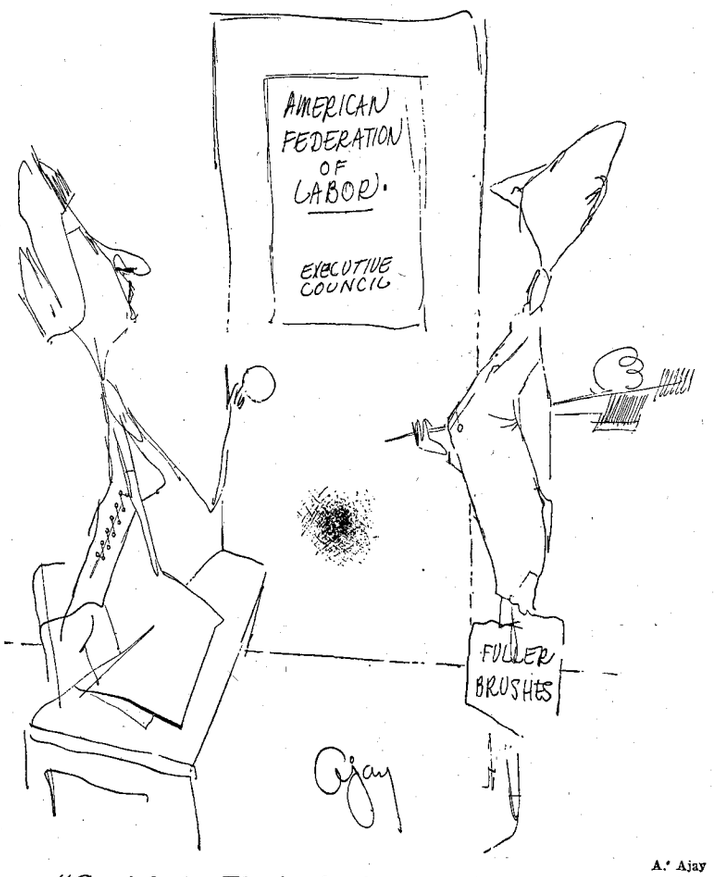
school board, and so reintroduced the Bill of Rights into the Pittsburgh area. The campaign was a great victory. Nevertheless, Labor's Non-Partisan League had allowed itself to be submerged. In consequence, the League gained little prestige, added little to its organizational power. Lesson: Victory alone is insufficient; it is imperative for future advances for the League to maintain its identity during a campaign.

What the League learned in Akron: The campaign in the Ohio home of the rubber unions got off to a flying start. But all elements drawn into the League's broad progressive front failed to abide by the accepted program. Feeling confident of retaining the labor vote, the confused and timid candidate for mayor, enlisted from the middle class, decided to appeal to labor's enemies for support by Red-baiting and slandering the labor movement. As a result, despite the initial mobilization of progressive and labor forces, the elements in the coalition farthest to the right antagonized the base of the League's voting power, confused the workers, and, by capitulating to the League's opponents, reinforced the counter-attack. Lesson: The League must not allow its middle-class adherents to feel that labor's vote is in the bag, and it must prevent capitulation to the slanderers of labor.

What the League learned in Detroit: The sit-down strikes swept organization into the automobile industry. In the campaign for a political voice in the community, the League —not wholly through its own choosing— limited its appeal too largely to the workers and failed to enlist middle-class backing. A. F. of L. top officials refused to coöperate and backed the reactionary candidate. The ticket, which failed to represent a democratic front of all progressives, was labeled "C.I.O." and was condemned as representing only one class and, at that, only a section of that class. The League lost the election, though it made a powerful showing. Lesson: Labor is not self-sufficient in politics; it must not limit its selection of candidates or its appeal too narrowly to the working class, but must build a democratic front. It must win unity of all labor forces. It dare not lose the support of professionals, middle-class people, and dissidents in the two old parties.

What the League learned in Seattle: The Commonwealth Federation of the Northwest, a coalition of A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions with real backing among the middle classes, had arisen independently of the League. In the Seattle mayoralty campaign, the League and the Commonwealth Federation coöperated and endorsed the same candidates. Yet Dave Beck, corrupt president of the A. F. of L. teamsters in the Northwest, refused to have any traffic with an organization in which the C.I.O. unions played an important part. By declaring war on the League and the Commonwealth Federation, and by deliberately splitting the union vote, Dave Beck weakened the progressives and defeated the League. Lesson: Disunity in the labor movement destroys the League's electoral chances and reinforces reaction. Unless the A. F. of L. can be enlisted in a joint campaign, the League is severely handicapped.

What the League learned in New York City: Labor's Non-Partisan League had been able to form an independent party, the American Labor Party, in New York largely because the state's electoral laws permit a candidate to run for office under more than one party designation, and also because of the advanced character of the labor and progressive movement. The campaign to reëlect Mayor LaGuardia, with the backing of a developed democratic front of the broadest type, including united labor supporters, progressive and middle-class adherents, and members of the Fusionist and progressive groups within the two old parties, resulted in a complete victory. The campaign to put progressives into the city council won fourteen seats, five of them A.L.P. candidates. Here the labor movement was not split, the A.L.P. maintained its identity, support was enlisted both from labor and the middle classes. The carrying out of the principles of the democratic front—which meant the avoidance of the mistakes pointed out above—proved the validity of properly organized independent political action. On the other hand, the A.L.P. neglected to build its organization sufficiently outside New York City—its power in 1938 was handicapped by the omission, though it worked to overcome this weakness. Lesson: While the League had succeeded in gaining a strong foothold in New York City, it still had to spread its organization throughout the state. It could not depend on one stronghold if it were to gain decisive power.



A. Ajay

"Go right in. They're having trouble keeping dust off that bust of Mr. Gompers."

It is one thing to realize mistakes, another to correct them. The League's understanding is clear enough. Its newly published *Handbook* emphasizes:

> Experience has shown that labor's effectiveness in politics is injured when it pitches its campaign on too narrow a note.
>
> Successful political action consists largely in developing the arts of education and persuasion, in winning a majority of the electorate to an understanding that labor is genuinely interested in the welfare of the community as a whole. . . . It is not difficult to demonstrate that the interests of so-called middle-class voters—professionals, small merchants, etc.—as well as those of unionized workers, are, on analysis, identical with those of organized labor. . . . Labor is in politics to serve the interests of the community as a whole; to obtain good government for all; and to unite all the voters against the fraction of exploiters of great wealth.

In addition, the *Handbook* advised League affiliates:

> Get candidates who can win support from various groups—all labor organizations, progressive professional people, foreign-language groups, etc.
>
> An important part of campaign publicity is pamphlets and leaflets directed toward different sections of the voters. You should have a pamphlet for women, Negroes, foreign-born, professionals (teachers, doctors, etc.) government employees, relief clients, and similar groups.
>
> Give each precinct captain a list of the friendly voters in his precinct . . . then send them out to talk with the voters in their neighborhoods.
>
> Hold at least one big city-wide meeting before the primary. Hold one or more after the primary. Hold also special rallies . . . for foreign-born, Negroes, teachers, women, relief clients, businessmen, etc.

Throughout the states, conventions have been called, and the work of implementing advanced political action mounts. In Pennsylvania, the Kennedy-for-Governor, Wilson-for-Senator campaign has for its immediate end the turning of Pennsylvania into a progressively administered state with powerful influence over the polit-

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ical future of the nation. In New York, the American Labor Party spreads upstate, and forms A.L.P. clubs in wards and precincts, educating the voters, widening the influence of the party. In Ohio, the "Defeat Davey" movement promises to put the corrupt Ohio machine out of office. In California, a broad coalition brings together labor and the progressives, some of whom supported the Epic movement in 1934. In the South, the League fights for extension of suffrage to Negroes and dispossessed white workers and farmers. In the Middle West and nationally, the League has entered into alliances for mutual aid with farm organizations, such as the Farmers' Union. In Michigan, the League supports the reëlection of Governor Murphy and opposes that of Senator Vandenberg and Representative Hoffman, leaders of the Republican, anti-New Deal bloc. In Minnesota and Wisconsin, the League bolsters the Farmer-Labor Party and the Progressives. In Washington, it supports the Commonwealth Federation. In the Southwest, small farmers and agricultural workers have already used the League to force political concessions from the big-grower-controlled state governments. In every state, Labor's Non-Partisan League is acquiring skill that will serve it in the 1938 gubernatorial, congressional, and local elections, when the once nearly impregnable power of reaction in politics will be challenged.

The stronger the League grows, the more frenzied becomes the opposition. Resistance of old-line politicians and reactionaries was expected, just as the hostility of the A.F. of L. hierarchy, which now menaces labor unity, could be predicted in advance. Yet so thoroughly has the drive for independent political action permeated the labor movement that, despite the commands of the executive council, the great majority of state federations continue to coöperate with the League, and in most states the officers of the League include high A.F. of L. officials. Where formal cooperation with the A.F. of L. proves impossible, progressives have decided to utilize William Green's own plan of setting up A.F. of L. non-partisan committees, and to turn them from opponents of Labor's Non-Partisan League into allies, supporting the same program and the same candidates.

Nor have various other disruptive groups been more successful than the executive council in holding back the League. Certain sections of the Socialist Party—particularly those factions dominated by the Trotskyites—have advocated the setting up of labor parties that exclude the progressives and middle classes and oppose the League's policy of building a democratic front. The result of such tactics is to split the labor vote in much the same manner as the executive council attempts to do through its non-partisan committees, and to isolate the progressives and middle-class people from the unions, as happened in Detroit. But such "labor parties" have made almost no progress and can count their adherents by the hundreds only. The Trotskyites and the Lovestoneites—particularly on the West Coast and in Michigan—have taken a similar position, more to split labor than to achieve any positive goal. But these groups, while they are valuable to the reactionaries and have influence among some misguided labor officials, possess almost no following among the working class.

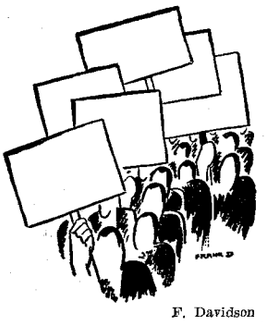
The League does not confine itself to preelection preparations. Every day it proves its worth by fighting for additional and adequate relief grants and for immediate passage by Congress of the Wages and Hours Bill. Unless the present legislators keep the interests of the majority in mind and act accordingly, the League realistically threatens them with defeat at the polls. The League has already published the voting records of all representatives and senators. Those who opposed the Wages and Hours Bill, those who do not support relief appropriations, can expect firm opposition when they come up for reëlection. But congressmen who have proved their friendliness for labor and its allies will receive the eager endorsement and aid of the League.

The League has gone far beyond the old A. F. of L. pure-and-simple approach of "endorsing" friends. The A. F. of L. approved and disapproved for the most part on the basis of relations between certain labor officials and the political machine in power. Of course, the Federation talked about the candidate's "record." But the Federation was concerned with playing the game inside the machine of one of the two parties. It did not, like the League, campaign nationally and in the states, with a well-defined program to guide it, and it did not campaign independently of the old parties. Nor did it enlist progressives in its fight. It did not build a democratic front, as the League is doing, on the basis of middle-class coöperation with a united labor movement.

As yet the League has not perfected the complex organization that can assure victories in all elections. While in most states the autonomous state Leagues, affiliated with the national body, are supported by per capita dues of their component organizations, the national office must still depend on voluntary contributions from some of the larger internationals. Much remains to be done in setting up committees in counties, wards, precincts, and smaller communities which will keep the individual voter in touch with League activities. Moreover, the League is shy of the word "machine." Remembering past connotations of the phrase "political machine," groups within the League debate the advisability of building a solid machine that can acquaint voters with the League's program, bring them to the polls, and hold their allegiance.

In 1938 the League enters its first national campaign as an independent political force. The stakes are high: the aim is the defeat of reaction, the repulse of fascism. The campaign has the possibility of surging forward with surprising vigor; but though it will undoubtedly record impressive gains, it cannot expect to be universally successful. What is important is that, by participating in the fight this autumn, the League can build its organization, its "machine" for 1940, and at the same time change the composition of Congress and the state legislatures so that they will truly represent the majority of the people. Above all, the League can demonstrate that democracy is able to protect itself against fascism through the democratic front, led by the League.

This promise of protection makes the League potentially the most important political weapon yet devised by the American people. For the democratic front, with the League as its leader, can be the precursor of an American People's Front that will have as its goal the security, peace, freedom, and progress of all the people.



F. Davidson

"March Comrades"

(Words for a workers' chorus, from "'A'-8")

Workers and farmers unite
You have nothing to lose
But your chains
The world is to win
This is May Day! May!
Your armies are veining the earth!

Railways and highways have tied
Blood of farmland and town
And the chains
Speed wheat to machine
This is May Day! May!
The poor's armies veining the earth!

Hirers once fed by the harried
Cannot feed them their hire
Nor can chains
Hold the hungry in
This is May Day! May!
The poor are veining the earth!

Light lights in air blossoms red
Like nothing on earth
Now the chains
Drag graves to lie in
This is May Day! May!
The poor's armies are veining the earth!

March comrades in revolution
From hirer unchained
Till your gain
Be the freedom of all
The World's May Day! May!
May of the Freed of All the Earth!

LOUIS ZUKOFSKY.

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The World's Fair to Date

By Joseph Starobin

MOST people do not realize that the World's Fair is not a city, state, or public enterprise. Skillful ballyhoo, organized on a big-business basis, has camouflaged what is, after all, a private venture.

It seems that a Mr. Joseph Shadgen confided the idea of a World's Fair in Flushing to several prominent New Yorkers in the spring of 1935. By September these gentlemen were aroused to its commercial possibilities. Underwritten by 131 stars of the very first magnitude in the industrial, political, and banking firmament, the Fair's charter states that it "is not organized for pecuniary profit" and that "the balance of proceeds over debts and obligations are to be used for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes."

Although city and state officials came to the banquets of the Fair Corporation without hesitation, it was considerably more difficult to get them concretely involved in the financial arrangements. At that time, Flushing Meadow Park was an extensive dumping ground: accumulated garbage fertilized the marsh grass; barricades of ashes, as high as ninety feet in places, ranged across a treeless, miserable waste. Several New York banks advanced some $2,000,000 for preliminary studies before the Albany legislators would give the city permission to reclaim and grade the property.

For several months little happened. Despite parleys, and behind-the-scene negotiations, it was not until after the Fair Corporation decided to adjourn its meetings indefinitely in March 1936, that the state and city became more coöperative. After two messages from Governor Lehman, the Legislature finally passed the enabling bills. Mr. J. J. Dunnigan, the Democratic leader and himself a Fair director, became chairman of the State Fair Commission, authorized to spend some $2,290,000.

With Grover Whalen's election as president in the spring of 1936, the Fair began to go places. Land condemnation proceedings got under way. Architectural contests were announced. Congress petitioned the State Department to issue invitations to all foreign nations. Grover Whalen made an anxious trip to Washington when President Roosevelt vetoed a Congressional appropriation to the Fair of $5,000,000 on the grounds that money ought not be voted to a private organization without some kind of control. Grover finally got $3,000,000 out of Congress under the authority of a Federal Fair Commission, of which Ed Flynn, the Bronx Democratic boss, became chairman at $10,000 a year with two assistants at $7,500 each.

In November 1936, assured of city, state, and federal commitments, the Fair Corporation conscripted a National Advisory Committee of 10,000 prominent citizens. The inevitable Nicholas Murray Butler, the charming Mrs. Vincent Astor, the solid Harvey Gibson; people of this grain were gathered at sumptuous banquets to get the Fair bond issue under way.

Mr. Harvey Gibson, of the Manufacturers' Trust Company, made a collection speech which hit the front page. He put the matter very simply: "No one will be asked to buy these bonds on the basis of aiding a community enterprise . . ." but rather, "from a purely business point of view, because of the possible profits to be realized. . . ."

The Fair directors only issued $27,829,000 in bonds, although the city, state, and nation had been involved to the tune of $35,000,000. This makes a meaningful contrast when one considers that among the Fair directors and sponsors are some of the men who have shouted long and loud against government interference with business.

Of course, it is true that many of the Fair improvements will remain to beautify Flushing Meadow Park. Nevertheless, it is significant that the city does not seem to be charging the Fair taxes, nor does it have the right of audit of the Fair's books. Meanwhile, the bonds draw 4 percent per annum, maturing in January 1941, and the Fair anticipates an income, the first year, of over a million, above all obligations, and some $8,000,000 if carried over into 1940.

Rummaging through the executive committee we find, among others, Mr. Winthrop Aldrich, who spends his spare time as chairman of the Chase National Bank; Mr. Floyd Carlisle, chairman of the Consolidated Edison Company, a leading utilities spokesman; Mr. Percy Straus, president of R. H. Macy; Mr. Matthew Woll, who needs no introduction among the hisses, and finally Mr. Grover Whalen, himself, the man who slugged the New York unemployed with a carnation in his lapel.

Bearing these names in mind, it is worth examining the larger contributions to the purchase of the Fair bonds:

Consolidated Edison Co.	$750,000
Pennsylvania Railroad	500,000
J. D. Rockefeller	250,000
R. H. Macy & Co.	468,000
New York Central Railroad	400,000
New York Telephone Co.	500,000

The Armour Company took $100,000; the Commodore Hotel and the Waldorf Astoria, $77,000 and $92,300, respectively. The New York Stock Exchange was persuaded to take $100,000 worth by none other than our old friend Mr. Richard Whitney, that past master at selling (other people's) bonds.

But Mr. Whalen's companies, especially the liquor concerns, made the largest contribution of all, totaling $1,100,000 of Fair bonds.

Which brings us flat smack upon Mr. Whalen.

Elected president of the Fair in May 1936, the directors voted him the sum of one dollar for his services. Clearing his throat, Mr. Whalen made the following little speech: "I have not thought in terms of compensation in connection with the Fair . . . my only thought has been that of a citizen . . . who believes that all of us should make some contribution to the common weal without reward. . . ."

In October 1937, Mr. Whalen found that his duties at Schenley Distillers, for which he received some $75,000 annually in the three preceding years, prevented his complete devotion to the common weal. He was relieved of those duties and made full-time director of the Fair. A news release at that time again expressed "deep appreciation for his service rendered without compensation," implying that he would receive another check for one dollar this year.

But on January 19, 1938, the New York *World-Telegram* revealed that the Fair budget lists Mr. Whalen at $75,000 for the current year, plus $25,000 expenses, apart from those "chargeable to other funds."

Despite the harsh things implied, Mr. Whalen is, nevertheless, a man of spirit and ideas. His genius is revealed in little things.

Take the matter of free advertising. The New York State Legislature was quietly persuaded to authorize the message of the Fair on 1938 license plates so that two million autos carry Whalen's advertising far and wide. The New York Telephone Company, a Fair investor, was prevailed upon to open a special exchange, and Mr. Whalen may now be reached, when in Flushing, at WOrld's Fair 6-1212. In addition, some seventeen thousand banks throughout the world organized Fair Savings Clubs under the slogan, "Save Today to See the World of Tomorrow."

And the three major-league baseball teams in New York—the Giants, Yankees, and Dodgers—will wear World's Fair insignia for the 1938 and 1939 seasons.

Last spring, Mr. Whalen made his second trip to Europe. It appears that San Francisc had already received permission for its Golde Gate 1939 Exposition from the Internationa Convention Bureau in Paris. Mr. Whalen had to horn in on this competition, which he did. It was pointed out that Brussels held a "World's Fair" in 1935, and Rome was planning one for 1942. According to the rules of the Convention Bureau, no "World's Fair" could be held in between. But, here again, Whalen came, saw, and conquered.

In his publicity work, Mr. Whalen is equally gifted. He escorts every passing digni-

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tary and celebrity to the Fair grounds in the tonneau of a huge Packard, while the cameras click away and breezes blow from Flushing Bay. The personalities whose front-page value the Fair has capitalized range from Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt to Prince Chichibu, the brother of the Mikado, honeymooning round the world with his charming wife. Even H. G. Wells felt impelled to visit the Fair site on his recent trip, striking bold type with his customarily provocative pronouncements about the World Tomorrow.

Some people, however, have indulged in adverse criticism. Impressed by the detail and dimension of the enterprise, they nevertheless find certain matters unexplained:

1. For instance, when the Board of Estimate opened the bidding for grading the Fair site, the Johnson Necaro Company entered a joint bid for $2,186,185, some $300,000 above the lowest figure. Despite the fact that the low bidder offered a $2,000,000 bond to insure completion of the job, and pointed to some sixteen million dollars' worth of other city work, the Board gave out the contracts to the Necaro Company.

2. The owners of some 632 acres of land, whose condemnation by the city made the Fair possible, were asking about $12,000,000 in the summer of 1936, but the assessed valuation only a year earlier came to one-sixth that figure. Although the land was worth $2,000,000, Judge Lockwood finally awarded $3,638,939 and threw in another $1,500,000 to cover eighty-three acres for parking sites adjoining the Fair.

3. Paul Kern, the Civil Service Commissioner, charged in May 1937 that the Fair had broken its pledges to hire employees from the Civil Service. Whalen replied that only 30 percent of the jobs were rated by the Civil Service. But Kern insisted that no applications for ratings had ever been made, that of nine policemen hired by the Fair, four had never taken the exam; one failed the medical test, another the mental test, and the other three had been chosen 1500th, 1800th, and 2800th from the lists.

4. Although Mr. Woll heads its Labor Committee, I did not find the union label on the official Fair publication, the *World's Fair World*.

5. It was Mr. Robert Moses, the Fair Commissioner and a leading Republican, who spilled the beans about Mr. J. J. Dunnigan, a Fair director, and a leading Democrat. Moses charged that Dunnigan was conniving with the architects, Sloan and Robertson, for certain luxuries in the amphitheater that the state is building at a cost of $1,700,000. The architects were putting marble everywhere, even on the doors of the fire hose exits; building special suites and special kitchens not only for His Honor the Governor, but for Mr. Dunnigan himself. Finally, a special elevator rising only eighteen feet was under construction, and Mr. Moses said that was going too far. He predicted that when half through, the State Fair Commission was sure to apply for funds on the threat of leaving the state xhibits incomplete. Dunnigan deplored these revlations, but was compelled to promise the omission of the suites, the kitchens, the marble, and the special elevator.

But the way Mr. Whalen handled the protests over the absence of living American art exhibits at the Fair gilds the lily. At first, he insisted there were so many art museums in New York, why, then, build a separate building at the Fair? When the protests mounted, Mr. Whalen appeared to be deeply grieved at this public misunderstanding and replied with the remarkable sophistry that after all "art

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William Gropper

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was everywhere at the Fair . . . art was the very spirit of the Fair itself."

SO MUCH, then, for some of the men who are behind the Fair. If our investigation of their imperfections takes them down a peg or two, this ought not reflect upon the Fair itself.

Because the Fair, *per se,* is an enormous effort, attesting to the potentialities of coöperative human endeavor. There is a bold stroke of the imagination in every facet of the plans, a real exuberance in the Fair's dimensions, a wealth of labor in its preparations.

To make sure that everyone who wants to, gets there, the I.R.T. and the B.M.T. subways are enlarging and renovating their stations; the Independent subway system is drawing a special spur; the Long Island Railroad is constructing a depot in the very center of the Fair itself. Two parking spaces will provide for 35,000 autos at one time, with a special camp for trailers. The Whitestone bridge, between the Bronx and Long Island, is being rushed to completion. A tunnel—from Manhattan to Queens, under the East River—will be finished before the Fair opens.

Nine million cubic yards of earth, transported from Riker's Island, will refurbish the North Beach airport. The state has dredged Flushing Bay basin to accommodate three excursion steamers, 150 yachts, and droves of seaplanes at one time. A tidal gateway will keep the artificial lakes full of fresh water, while seventeen miles of intra-Fair roads are planned, with ten bridges and overpasses for simplified communication.

The number of visitors has been anticipated to the fraction; 250,000 are expected daily, and the maximum will reach 800,000 on a single day. Gas mains, water pipes, electrical cables will be necessary to provide utilities for the Fair patrons. A sewage tunnel, larger than the Holland tubes under the Hudson, is called for, as well as eight sixty-five-ton transformers to supply power equal to the needs of the city of Baltimore.

Ten thousand trees and 250,000 shrubs are being planted, harmoniously spaced among the fifty thousand benches, and illuminated in the evenings by invisible mercury lamps.

Against this impressive physical background the spirit of Americana emerges in the nature and proportions of the exhibits.

A sixty-five-foot likeness of George Washington will stand in front of a replica of the Federal Building, in which the first president was inaugurated. Along the central mall, the figures of the Four Freedoms will rise above a paving of red, white, and blue: the Freedoms of Speech, Press, Assembly, and Religion. The heroic figure of Paul Bunyan will confront the mythical preacher, Johnny Appleseed, against a background of murals and cascading fountains.

Three dozen states of the Union will divide their exhibits into three sections, indicating the colonial influences on their regional cultures: Georgian, French, and Spanish.

While New York City is building a Glass House as a permanent improvement, the Empire State's marine amphitheater will accommodate symphonic concerts, operas, and one-night stands across the waters of an artificial lake.

Above all, the Fair management has attempted to eliminate the glaring commercialisms which leave such sour aftertaste and afterthought in expositions of the ordinary kind. While the large auto, glass, chemical, liquor, food, and electric trusts are erecting their own buildings, the Fair itself will construct twenty-five edifices to coördinate and control the advertising of the smaller corporations. The major industries and interests will accommodate their educational and scientific exhibits in separate zones, such as: Zone of Communications, Medicine and Public Health, Community Interests, Business Administration, etc.

As for Man himself, a huge throbbing heart will pulsate in the Public Health Building, low but distinctly audible, emanating from a transparent image of an eighteen-foot man.

Nor have Man's children been neglected. While their parents find their fun and education at the exhibits or the amusement section which fronts a mail-order lake, the kiddies will have an exposition of their own. A special miniature World's Fair, with puppet shows, playgrounds, and perambulators, will make every day kiddies' day: the veritable answer to a mother's prayer.

All this will open less than four hundred days away, just in time to commemorate the 150th anniversary of George Washington's first inauguration.

While the international hookups on the day of the initial ceremonies carry Franklin D. Roosevelt's voice across the seven seas to God's every acre, the regiments of every army in the world will march before him in review—unless, perchance, they should have to march, before then, in grimmer preview on a very different field.

This brings us into the realm of international affairs.

Among the sixty-four countries that will participate in the Hall of Nations or in special areas along the lakes, particular interest attaches to the Soviet exhibit. Most countries are confined to the display of native costumes, medieval castles, or national cuisines, often some particular specialty such as Dutch cheese, Belgian carillons, or Bohemian glass. On the other hand, the U.S.S.R. is reliably reported to be planning an exhibition of its industrial and cultural advance along the lines of the one which created such a sensation at the Paris Exposition.

Charles Martin

And because this is a super-Fair many other contradictions and comparisons appear. For instance, Mr. Whalen has not blushed to call the central mall the Court of Peace. Nor is the League of Nations supposed to be embarrassed in its $75,000 display by the buildings of the fascist nations, Italy, Germany, and Japan.

In general, considerable mystery attaches to the fascist exhibits. The Germans and Japanese have been very reserved in the publicity of their plans. The "chamber of horrors" featuring that "brown-shirted fanatic who menaces the peace of the world," which Mayor LaGuardia suggested amid fury and indignation in Berlin, will be absent.

M. Pedrazzi, the Fair Commissioner for Italy, remarked upon his arrival here that the exhibit of his country would feature the "real Italy, industrious, productive, friendly." So friendly, in fact, that Spain (as well as China) cannot come to the Fair at all, engaged as they are in overcoming Italian, German, and Japanese friendship at home.

Despite these contradictions, the Fair affirms a truly noble and inspiring theme. Proclaiming the slogan, "Building the World Tomorrow," its bulletin continues: "The Fair will throw into relief the fences that isolate peoples of different classes and groups, of different cities, states, and nations . . . it will point to the way to leveling these barriers to a better life . . . and will indicate what Man can accomplish if he lives truly as a social being."

In the spirit of this theme, the Fair is constructing its theme building, an exhibit which tops them all.

A fifty-story three-sided column, called a trylon, will rise beside an eighteen-story hollow sphere, two hundred feet in diameter. Eight steel columns support this globe, the supports hidden by a fountain so that the visitor will observe a huge globe borne aloft by kaleidoscopic spray. A lofty bridge swings from the trylon to the perisphere, from which an inclined ramp runs down in a long electric stairway to the earth, large enough for pageants, parades, and thousands of spectators. While within the magic sphere, visitors suspended on floating carpets will "see the sights and hear the sounds of the World Tomorrow."

The prospectus concludes, "We shall try to answer the question, what kind of world have we built? What kind of world are we building? What kind of world should we build?"

Indeed, this is precisely the preoccupation of all progressive humanity. Today, the answers to these compelling questions come to the lips of hundreds of thousands, of millions of people. If the World's Fair of 1939 helps to shape these answers for new millions, it will have achieved a result which the Fair directors could hardly have foreseen.

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The Moscow Trials

A Statement by American Progressives

WE, the undersigned, are fully aware of the confusion that exists with regard to the Moscow trials and the real facts about the situation in the Soviet Union.

Though the reports of the trials have appeared only in fragmentary form in most American newspapers, they have by sheer weight of evidence established a clear presumption of the guilt of the defendants. In fact, most newspapers have discarded the earlier charges of "frame-up" and now admit the validity of the trials. It is their "interpretation" that tends to sow confusion as to the real meaning of the trials, as well as obscure the truth about the achievements of the Soviet Union as recorded by honest progressive opinion.

These are: the peaceful and progressive solution of the problems of all minority peoples and nationalities within its borders; the magnificent gains in industry and agriculture; the increase in the standard of living; the growth of educational and cultural opportunities and health facilities; the active participation of the overwhelming majority of the people in the processes of social development; the sane foreign policy that makes the Soviet Union an outstanding leader for the preservation of peace; and its realistic attempts to make of the League of Nations an instrument of peace despite the sabotage by the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis with British tory connivance.

Available information about the leading defendants has been meagerly presented, subdued, or "interpreted" in such a way as to create a false impression. It isn't true that they were always supporters of collectivist doctrine. They were "theoretical" opponents of the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, the program of collectivization, and other important phases of the policies of the government which resulted in a higher standard of living for the people. Removed from office, they were later generously reinstated when they made professions of good faith. Thereupon they resorted to duplicity and conspiracy and allied themselves with long-standing enemies of the Soviet Union—nationalists who had ties with capitalist, fascist, and White Guard allies, and even with former czarist *agents provocateurs*. Degeneration may therefore be charged to the defendants, and not to the Soviet Union, which gains strength internally and externally by the prevention of treason and the eradication of spies and wreckers.

It is well to recall that during earlier days many leading and diplomatic figures trained in political schools of thought antagonistic to the new order had given grudging assent to the early regime, only to resort to their early beliefs when grave difficulties were faced. Likewise, during the difficult years of the first and second Five-Year Plans, the Soviet Union was forced to rely upon technicians trained in czarist days, some of whom were not wholly sympathetic to the new order, as well as technicians from capitalist countries.

Likewise, for twenty years the Soviet Union has been surrounded by capitalist countries, and latterly by the vicious fascist aggressors, who have been restrained from open attack upon the Soviet Union only by its growing vitality and self-defense measures. The opponents of the Soviet Union have therefore been forced to resort to covert means. They have disseminated reactionary propaganda and financial patronage to disaffected elements within the Soviet Union through special agents. Drastic attack must be met by drastic defense: it is in this light that we regard the trials.

Nor do we dissociate the implications of the trials from our own domestic problems. No one denies the existence of intricate international spy systems, one of which, stemming from fascist Germany, was recently uncovered in the United States. No one denies the encroachments of fascism, its callous disregard for the rights of people and its invasion and annexations of foreign territory—Italy in Ethiopia, Japan in China, Germany and Italy in Spain, Germany in Austria (with Czechoslovakia next!)—thus precipitating a new world-war situation. No one denies the penetration of the American continent by fascist propaganda, nor its reflection in the minds of reactionaries in every country, whereby external fascism finds its internal allies. British tory policy facilitates fascist aggression internationally, and attempts to destroy the People's Front in China, Spain, and France. Our own American tories attempt to utilize anti-Soviet propaganda in our domestic struggle, in order to mask the international aspects of fascism, and to destroy the unity of workers, liberals, and progressives. Much of their ammunition is supplied by Trotskyist sources, and is used in attempts to weaken the anti-fascist fight, to discredit the people's front, the C.I.O., and the Soviet Union. American trade-union leaders have denounced these Trotskyist enemies of progress, and recently six thousand Mexican trade-union delegates unanimously condemned Leon Trotsky as an enemy of the Mexican people, the People's Front of Spain and China, and the fight against fascism.

The measures taken by the Soviet Union to preserve and extend its gains and its strength therefore find their echoes here, where we are staking the future of the American people on the preservation of progressive democracy and the unification of our efforts to prevent the fascists from strangling the rights of the people. American liberals must not permit their outlook on these questions to be confused, nor allow their recognition of the place of the Soviet Union in the international fight of democracy against fascism to be destroyed. We call upon them to support the efforts of the Soviet Union to free itself from insidious internal dangers, and to rally support for the international fight against fascism—the principal menace to peace and democracy.

(Signed) Arthur Arent, Nelson Algren, Beril Becker, Thomas Browne Bennett, Arnold Blanch, Marc Blitzstein, Roman Bohnen, Millen Brand, Phoebe Brand, Dorothy Brewster, J. R. Brown, Louis B. Budenz, Edwin Berry Burgum.

Alan Campbell, Morris Carnovsky, Vera Caspary, Si-lan Chen, Haakon M. Chevalier, Ch'ao-ting Chi, Harold Clurman, Robert Coates, Merle Colby, Jack Conroy, Curt Conway, Ted Couday, Malcolm Cowley, Bruce Crawford, Kyle Crichton, Robert M. Cronbach, Lester Cole, H. W. L. Dana, Jerome Davis, Stuart Davis, Paul de Kruif, Muriel Draper, Robert W. Dunn.

Fred Ellis, Dr. Garland Ethel, Philip Evergood, Guy Endore, Louis Ferstadt, Frederik V. Field, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn.

Jules Garfield, Hugo Gellert, Robert Gessner, Harry Gottlieb, Michael Gold, Emmett Gowen, Bernard D. N. Grebanier, Richard Greenleaf, William Gropper, Harrison George, Dashiell Hammett, Abraham Harriton, Henry Hart, Clarence Hathaway, Lillian Hellman, Granville Hicks, Langston Hughes, Rolfe Humphries, Leo Hurwitz.

Burton C. James, Florence B. James, V. J. Jerome, Joe Jones, Vladimir D. Kazakevich, Adelaide Klein, H. S. Kraft, Joshua Kunitz.

John Howard Lawson, Corliss Lamont, Catherine Lawrence, Melvin Levy, Jay Leyda, Philip Loeb, Louis Lozowick, Herman Michelson, William Christie MacLeod, Albert Maltz, V. J. McGill, Selden C. Menefee, Alfred Morang, A. B. Magil, Bruce Minton, Elizabeth Olds, Moissaye J. Olgin, John O'Malley, Albert M. Ottenheimer, Samuel Ornitz, Raymond Otis, Dorothy Parker, Paul Peters, John Hyde Preston, Rebecca E. Pitts, Samuel Putnam.

Charles Recht, Wallingford Riegger, Lynn Riggs, Holland D. Roberts, Anna Rochester, Harold J Rome, Henry Roth, Paul Romaine, Margaret Schlauch, Morris U. Schappes, Edwin Seaver George Seldes, Howard Selsam, Irwin Shaw, Dr Henry E. Sigerist, George Sklar, Harry Slochower Bernard Smith, F. Tredwell Smith, Jessica Smith Hester Sondergaard, Raphael Soyer, Lionel Stander Bernhard J. Stern, Housely Stevens, Jr., Philip Stevenson, Maxwell S. Stewart, Paul Strand, Anna Louise Strong, John Stuart.

Genevieve Taggard, Nahum Tschabasov, Ethel Turner, Keene Wallis, Max Weber, George T. Willison, Frances Winwar, Martin Wolfson, Victor A Yakhontoff, Marguerite Young.

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READERS' FORUM

"America's Guilt in Spain"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I AGREE with NEW MASSES that in respect to Spain the guilt of the United States is the guilt of Cain. I do not agree in blaming this guilt on an act of Congress—or on the Constitution, or on the Declaration of Independence. It is perfectly clear that in this case the guilt is personal. When a citizen of this country last January undertook to ship certain parts of airplanes to the Spanish government in accordance with international law and the treaty with Spain of 1899, the President used his position to bawl him out personally, and used his power, which was then considerable, to force through Congress a resolution ignoring the sanctity of treaties, betraying the cause of a friendly democracy, and giving aid to the bloodiest exponent of fascism which the world has yet seen, beside whom Hitler and Mussolini with all their good will to slaughter look like pikers. Later the administration secured an amendment to the Neutrality Law legalizing its application to a civil war, while refusing to enforce it in the clear case of the foreign war waged by Italy and Germany.

I agree with NEW MASSES in holding that the advocates of neutrality have a special responsibility for the guilt of the United States in Spain. It was under cover of the sentiment which they fostered for keeping the United States out of war that the administration was able to capture and misuse the law which they left carelessly lying around. I hold that the advocates of collective action also have a responsibility for the disgrace of their country. It seems clear that the initiative of the President in the case of Spain was the result of his fondness for collective action—the desire to associate himself with England, France, and twenty-five other nations in a policy of non-intervention. It may be admitted, however, that, for the most part, the advocates of peace whether by the isolationist or the collective-security route are innocent of sinister intention in acquiescing in a policy which has assisted in the sheer murder of thousands of non-combatants in accordance with Franco's method of making war. The guilt lies with the inconsistency of the President, who in November 1936 asserted: "We are acting to simplify definitions and facts by calling war war when armed invasion and resulting killing of human beings takes place." It lies with the cynical indifference of Secretary Hull, who asks blandly, "How do I know that the bombs exported to Italy and Germany are used in Spain?" It lies above all with the nest of fascist sympathizers in the State Department, now exposed by Messrs. Pearson and Allen: Dunn, Moffat, Hackworth, and Moore—in whose adroit hands Roosevelt and Hull have been, up to the present, something less resilient than putty. I agree with NEW MASSES that the immediate necessity, in the name of national honor and human decency, can be met by the President in lifting the embargo against Spain.

Chicago, Ill. ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

He Also Agrees

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I AGREE thoroughly with your vigorous and effective editorial of April 19, that the issue is not collective security versus "isolation" but the policy of collective efforts to maintain peace by the peace-seeking peoples and governments of the capitalist democracies and the Socialist democracy of the Soviet Union versus the policy of collective aggression and war by the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis and its reactionary collaborators in all countries."

The fascist powers have taken every advantage of the failure of democratic nations to act in concert against their brazen aggression. Unless they are stopped democracy is doomed. The events following the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany prove conclusively and again that wherever fascism goes, a reign of terror is waged against trade unionists, and liberals of any character, not to speak of Socialists or Communists. Plans to seize Czechoslovakia are already in the offing, and democracy there will likewise be obliterated unless other democracies prevent it.

I also believe with you that Spain holds our future in the balance. In spite of recent Italian victories, for they are Italy's and not Franco's victories, and in spite of the perfidy of England, I believe that loyalist success in Spain is not hopeless. If the embargo against Spain is lifted and munitions are permitted to be sent to a legally elected government fighting for survival against a fascist foe, loyalist Spain can still win. I have, therefore, joined with the thousands of others in urging the President, Secretary Hull, and Chairman McReynolds of the House Foreign Affairs Committee to lift the embargo on Spain.

I know of no better way for intellectuals to preserve themselves and their contributions to culture than to join with labor against the terror and obscurantism of fascism.

New York City. BERNHARD J. STERN.

—and So Does He

TO THE NEW MASSES:

LET me express myself as emphatically in agreement with the three-point program for the drastic revision of American neutrality legislation, as presented in the April 19th issue of NEW MASSES. Ditto for the editorial "America's Guilt in Spain."

The Neutrality Act, as it has been misapplied and unapplied, has been as disastrous and costly a farce in the United States as the so-called "non-intervention" committee has been in Europe. Through this act the American government has become an accomplice in the destruction of democracy in Spain and an indirect, but important, supporter of the "collective aggression" of the three war-making dictatorships—in flagrant contrast to the unquestionable desires of an overwhelming majority of the American people.

On this issue many well-meaning people may seek the safety of silence, rather than speak their minds. But a great many Americans will not cheapen themselves with silence, nor dirty their hands with Chamberlainism. It is time that Americans formed a united front to end the existing premium on aggression—and to renounce further traffic with the world's notorious aggressors. It can be done. If democracy, freedom, and humanity mean anything to us, it must be done.

New York City. LELAND STOWE.

A Boy Writes F. D. R.

TO THE NEW MASSES:

My son Peter, who is twelve, has thought of sending the President chain letters about Spain. I enclose his letter, which may help put other letters into motion.

LESTER COHEN.

[Enclosure]

Dear Mr. President:

Spain is being invaded by fascists armies. The fascists can buy munitions in the United States, but due to the Neutrality Act, the Spanish government cannot. For the sake of the Spanish democracy, and the democracies of the world, please do what you can to let the Spanish people buy arms.

I am sending this letter to a number of friends, I hope they will sign it and send it to their friends. The tenth person to sign is to send it to you. I hope these persons will send similar letters to their friends, so that a chain of letters will come to you from all over the United States, asking you to do what you can to help government Spain.

Mr. President, we appeal to you.

Doylestown, Pa. PETER GRAY COHEN.

"A Day of Beauty"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IN the Sunday *Times* of a few weeks ago, an advertisement appeared headed: "Thrilling Beauty Experience—Spend a Whole Day at Helena Rubenstein's Salon." I read on:

"It is a delightful way to spend the day—*and you have something to show for it.* A beautiful, young skin. A sylph-like figure. Gleaming hair, expertly coiffed. Soft, young white hands.

"The full Day of Beauty includes: Planning Your Routine with Staff Physician; Corrective, or Reducing, Exercises; Circulation Massage; Sana-therm Table; Sun-bath in the Sun-Ray Clinique; Pasteurized Milk Bath; Zurich Room Matière Vivante Luncheon; Custom-Made Face Treatment; Fruit Goblet from the Salon Health Bar; Scalp Treatment, Shampoo, Balsam Oil Permanent; Pedicure; Manicure with Special Hand Massage.

"Doesn't it sound thrilling? A Day of Beauty at Helena Rubenstein's? It is thrilling. If you can't come for the full day, come for an hour or two—for whatever you need for your beauty in whatever time you have to devote to it. Moreover, a beauty expert at Helena Rubinstein's will teach you the ways to develop your beauty at home. Telephone ELdorado 5-2100 for further information."

It's too bad that more people didn't see this thing. I'm sure that thousands of kids with rickets would have come all the way uptown to take that pasteurized milk bath—internally.

Yours—for a *thrilling* beauty experience. . . .

MEL EVANS.

New York City.

Letters in Brief

ERNESTINE GONZALES FLEISCHMAN, of the United Spanish Women's Committee, writes of the recent demonstration in Washington sponsored by that group, at which Representative Bernard called for "justice and arms for Spain," and Representative McReynolds, of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said, with "callous irrelevancy," that "the women and children of the United States are more important than the women and children of Spain." . . . Austin W. Morrill, Jr., feels that John Murray's recent letter to NEW MASSES, which pointed to a vicious attempt by the Chamber of Commerce of Richmond, Va. to inject Red-baiting into a road-safety campaign, was hypersensitive. "Red-baiters don't need to be subtle," he says. . . . C. Oumansky, counselor to the Soviet Embassy in Washington, writes that the Gorky Institute of Literature in Moscow, which is gathering biographical data on the late Maxim Gorky, "has requested me to appeal to American readers for documents, letters, or other material relating to Gorky's visit to the United States in 1906." . . . Robert M. MacGregor, of Winchester, Conn., writes that "E. M. Ellsworth's article 'They Won in Puerto Rico,' in the April 5 NEW MASSES started me thinking. If the sailors and longshoremen there can effect a complete blockade for forty-one days, why can't our longshoremen do something about the bomb shipments out of Philadelphia and Baltimore to Germany, the scrap-iron shipments to Japan and Germany?" . . . A communication from Labor's Non-Partisan League, Hotel Willard, Washington, D. C., informs us that full voting records of all Congressmen and Senators can be had on application.

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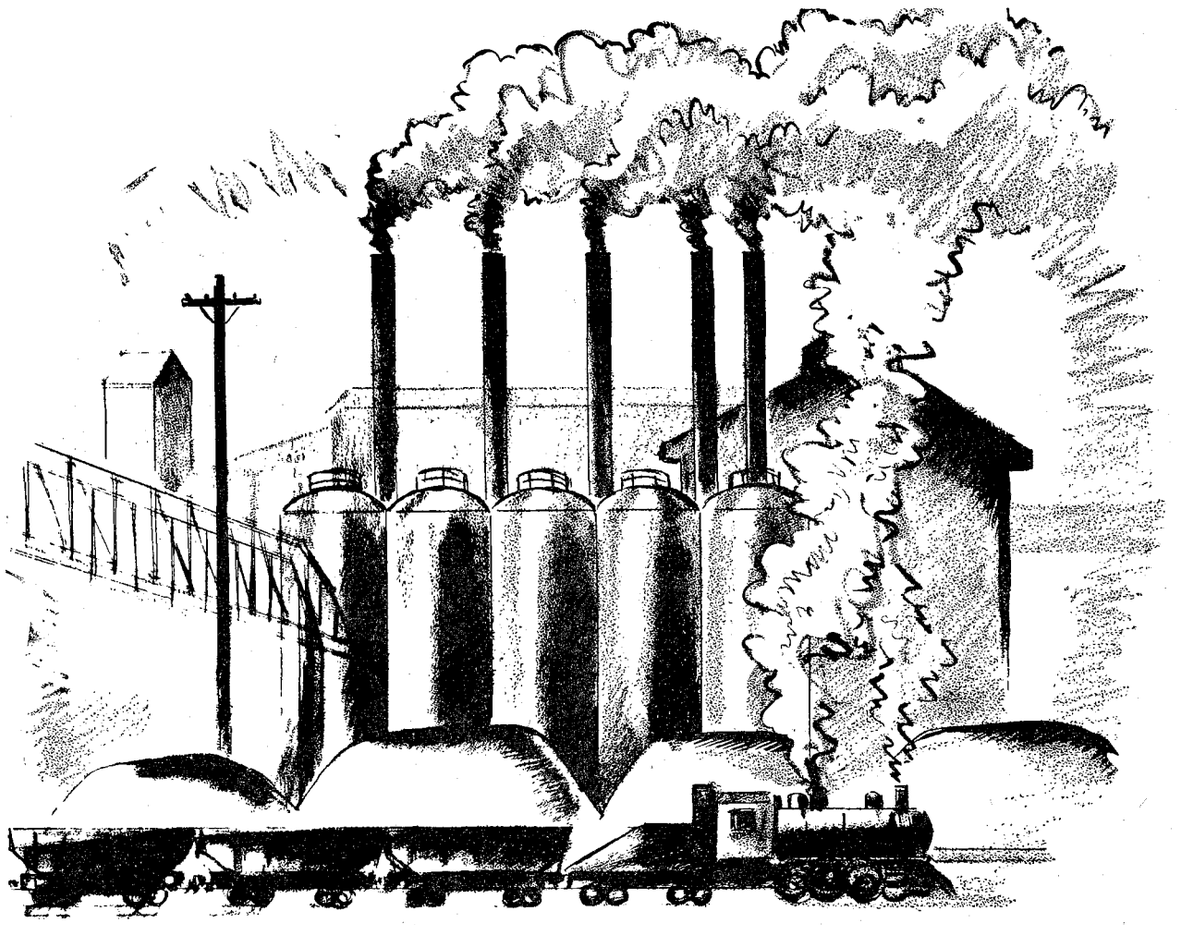

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BOOK REVIEWS

Phases of Fiction

MAN'S COURAGE, *by Joseph Vogel. Alfred A. Knopf.* $2.50.
WHAT PEOPLE SAID, *by W. L. White. Viking Press.* $2.75.
LONG HAUL, *by A. I. Bezzerides. Carrick & Evans.* $2.
HOPE OF HEAVEN, *by John O'Hara. Harcourt, Brace & Co.* $2.

AS we approach the close of the Thirties, we face the responsibility of evaluating the major tendencies which have emerged in what is undoubtedly one of the most turbulent and productive decades in American fiction. Any conclusive judgment is obviously premature. We know that Dreiser remained a force, though he contributed nothing new; that Sinclair Lewis became overwhelmed by a complex world for which he had not bargained in the Twenties; that Ernest Hemingway took a hopeful turn from the inverted sentimentalism of the "lost generation" to the sterner realism of a generation which refused to evade the threat of fascism and war. We have listened to gloomy prophets who nailed down the coffin of proletarian literature at the very moment when the robust corpse was attending banquets in his honor. We know that few giants stalked the earth, but that the accumulated effort of many younger writers produced an emphasis on social realism and craftsmanship which has to give a new tone to American letters. There has been a definite shift from the antithesis between personality and society to the alliance between creative effort and social progress. The tradition of rootlessness is dead; so is the cult of "self-expression." But while we know all this, and a great deal more, we shall probably have to continue, for some time, to revise the obituaries and validate the birth certificates of the Thirties.

The novels before us reflect some of the tendencies which any study of the decade will have to take into account. Joseph Vogel's ably written and persuasive *Man's Courage* is a testament to the enduring vitality of the type of proletarian novel which Michael Gold introduced in 1930 with his *Jews Without Money*. Gold's book was the forerunner in this decade of quite a few novels about immigrant families in large-city slums. Vogel has shifted the scene to the Polish community of Genesee, a small town in upstate New York, where Adam Wolak and his wife Marya wear away their wretched days. W. L. White's novel about the Norssexes and Carroughs of "Oklarada," a middle-class, Midwestern city, follows the general pattern, though on a more restricted scale, of Dos Passos' study of American life in the war and post-war period. White uses the detached, documentary method to portray the collapse of that species of American liberalism so generously exemplified by his father, the editor of the Emporia *Gazette*. Like the John Steinbeck of *In Dubious Battle*, A. I. Bezzerides has given a surface description of West Coast workers fighting against heavy odds to make a living, and for this purpose he has mastered Steinbeck's swift, dramatic, and unanalytic prose style. John O'Hara, the most gifted disciple of the earlier Hemingway, displays a precision of form and an indifference to significant content which characterizes the work of the "hard-boiled" school.

Nothing is to be gained by attempting a comparative judgment of these four novels. Each of these writers is aiming at a specific effect, and within the framework of his purpose each does a remarkably good job. I believe that, taken as a whole, this group is a symptom of the superior craftsmanship and good sense of at least the best of current fiction. The point is rather to see how these novels share the benefits and limitations of the traditions in which they are written.

Vogel's second novel, like *At Madame Bonnard's*, is charged with powerful feeling, and that is all to the good. Few writers have given a more immediate sense of the bitter reality of poverty: not the concept of poverty, nor hearsay about its sufferers, but poverty in its raw and tangible horror. Vogel's Adam Wolak, who after eighteen years in the New World had actually saved $80 toward the farm which he left Poland to buy, is a tower of physical strength. Like Hemingway's Harry Morgan, Adam had all his life thought of power as residing in his two fists. When you have no work, he learned, your fists are no good. You sell your tools to Swida the landlord. You want to buy a shovel so you can make some money removing snow, but all you get is a five-dollar credit toward your four months' back-rent. It is heartbreaking to go to relief, but you go. Then you wait for the red tape to unwind, and then it is almost too late. When you get a temporary job, you lose relief; you get evicted; you try to fight back because your son is sick in bed, dying of undernourishment; you get shot. As Doc Goss said, "helplessness is what degrades one the most."

Sid Goteliffe

Miss Lyons, the only relief-worker who cared about you, was right: "Human life doesn't grow in ashes. It rots in ashes." And she was right, too, though it was hard to do something about it, when she said that the city is filled with Wolaks, that "you could accomplish so much for yourselves if only you came out of your dark holes, if only you realized your power." That is what Mike Zamorski, the tinsmith's apprentice, and Jerry, the unemployed organizer from Buffalo, tried to tell you. Maybe that is the significance of your brother Andrew's death in the February fighting in Vienna.

Vogel's minor characters are more sharply realized than his central figure. He has written memorable ironic portraits of Mrs. Brasted, the social worker, whose name is a good approximation of her character; and of Mrs. Janis, the vote-recruiter for Alderman Joseph D'Amico, who used a War Department Manual as an Americanization text. Doc Goss, the ancient horse-doctor, is a striking symbol of middle-class intelligence and training gone to seed. And the pictures of Marya, the boy Stephen, and old Mrs. Milewski indicate a warmth of human sympathy which one misses in the more urbane novelists. But Adam remains somewhat blurred, or rather unexplored; he is essentially an inarticulate man, and Vogel has not altogether wrung out the secret of his massive silence. There are psychological depths which the writer has brilliantly suggested but not fully analyzed, and this, I must add, is a limitation which one would like to see removed from the splendid tradition of *Jews Without Money*. It is an incidental limitation in this book, however, and should by no means obscure the fact that Vogel has written one of the notable novels of the year.

In a very favorable review of Vogel's "volcanic novel," W. L. White last week pointed out that his characters "seem to fit too snugly into a conventional Marxian matrix . . ." I would prefer to say that the major limitation of White's own novel, as of Dos Passos' *U.S.A.*, is that it misses some superb opportunities of enriching the meaning of the characters by failing to "fit" them into the "Marxian matrix." White is obviously fed up with the system of social morality which produces a Whitney in New York, and on a smaller scale an Isaac or Lee Norssex in Oklarada. He sees through the outlived "progressivism" of the Carroughs. But his attitude is essen-

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tially that of the conventional newspaperman who has been trained by his editor to record what he sees and hears (What People Say), not what he thinks. He chronicles the rise and fall of a minor financier involved in a statewide scandal, and he seems unwilling or unable to reach to the basic social roots of the catastrophe. As Granville Hicks pointed out in his review of Dos Passos last week, this is an attitude that leads to a laxness of conception which no gifted writer can afford to tolerate. It leads, for another thing, to an over-accumulation of reportorial detail and an inability to concentrate on the significant detail, errors which damage the documentary novel in general and *What People Said* in particular. At the same time, White is extraordinarily sensitive to the nuances of American speech, and his experience as a journalist, legislator, and Republican county-chairman in Kansas, has equipped him for a thoroughly documented study of machine politics and finance. His formidable story of the Oklarada oligarchy is unmistakably the work of a new and impressive social novelist.

Mr. Bezzerides' *Long Haul* is at the opposite pole from *What People Said*. It is a rapid and brief story about two wildcat drivers on the West Coast who work their heads off paying installments on the truck they some day hope to buy. Theirs is a futile fight to lift themselves out of a condition of virtual bondage to the owners of the truck lines. These plain, honest, hardworking men are destined to crack up under the strain of twenty-hour shifts on the road, the worry about spoiled fruit cargoes, the bickerings with the wholesalers. Like Adam Wolak, the brothers Nick and Paul are caught up in the fatal contradiction between their desire to work and the availability of jobs, between their dreams of independence and the slavery of debt. The pace of Bezzerides' story conforms perfectly to the nervous tempo of his characters. His simple and readable account is another contribution to the short-novel treatment of proletarian themes. I suspect that some of the best proletarian work will be done in this form, as indeed has already been proved by the long stories in Richard Wright's *Uncle Tom's Children,* by Albert Maltz's " Season of Celebration," and Theodore Strauss' *Night at Hogwallow*. The form is restricted in scope and leaves little room for either social analysis or psychological study, but it is well-suited for the creation of a sharp mood or relatively simple situation. It encourages compact writing and removes the temptation to produce premature epics.

O'Hara's books, however, show that the streamlined form, while it places the emphasis squarely on craftsmanship, very often relieves the writer of his responsibility to deal with important themes. Everybody agrees by now that O'Hara can tell a story just about as well as any American writer, but that he has so far found nothing vital to say. His latest book does nothing to upset the judgment. I wouldn't trade him for James Cain, but I have the same complaint to make about both writers. Sex and violence as a formula for effective fiction had its heyday in the Thirties, but when you compare the formula with that of the other three books under review you will see why it has outlived its usefulness. O'Hara writes carefully and swiftly. He is a superb craftsman. He provides as good an example as any I know that the characteristic writers of our decade have assimilated the best experimental prose of their predecessors in the Twenties. Yet as we reëxamine the fiction of the present decade, we shall confirm the ancient truth that style is most effective as the expression of passionate convictions and serious ideas. SAMUEL SILLEN.

John Mackey

"They weren't really immigrants. They landed at Plymouth Rock—not Ellis Island."

Political Biology

HEREDITY AND POLITICS, *by J. B. S. Haldane. W. W. Norton & Co.* $2.50.

THE study of human heredity can hardly avoid being socially significant. For while other branches of biology tend to reduce mankind to a laboratory type specimen, heredity, dealing with the nature of species variations, must consider differences among men, some of which are social differences of class, "fitness," or race, whose interactions in part make up the body politic. The student of human heredity is thus, by the very nature of his subject, faced with problems of the interrelations of heredity and politics, and to the extent that he investigates these problems he may be said to be a political biologist.

It would be difficult to find a scientist better fitted to write on political biology than Professor Haldane. Not only is he an outstanding researcher and authority in the field of human genetics, but he has also evinced a mature social consciousness and a practical interest in political affairs as indicated by his recent aid to loyalist Spain and his leadership in anti-Chamberlain demonstrations in London. Professor Haldane in his own activities has clearly unified his theoretical knowledge with his social practice, and this unification compounded with deep knowledge and rigorous thinking permeates *Heredity and Politics* and determines its political pertinency.

The author presents his thesis in the opening sentences of the book:

> I propose . . . to examine certain suggested applications of biology to political science. In particular I wish to examine certain statements regarding equality and inequality, some of which have been used to justify not only ordinary policy but even wars and revolutions.

These doctrines are (1) "all men are created equal," (2) "the unfit should be sterilized," (3) "certain classes are congenitally superior, and these should reproduce more rapidly," (4) certain races are congenitally superior, and (5) crossing between different races is harmful. We have all heard of these doctrines and their political applications. The first, the only one based on equality, in great measure motivated our own revolution against George III. The others, the stock-in-trade of the eugenists, we see almost daily being used by the fascist powers to justify the most frightful political and military aggressions ever perpetrated by man against man.

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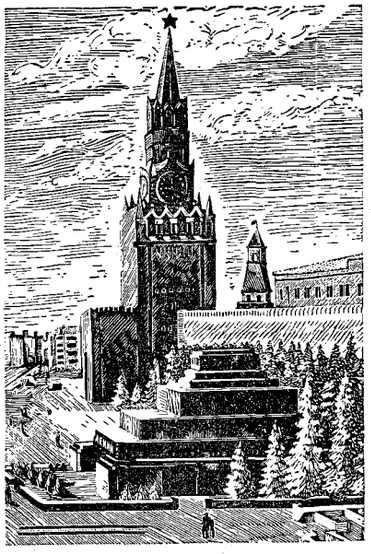

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Professor Haldane then proceeds to analyze these doctrines on the basis of accepted facts and principles of human heredity. The lay reader may find the preliminary discussion of the fundamental mechanisms of heredity somewhat compressed. However, it is presented in a novel and clear fashion, and it is especially informative in its critical discussion of the relative roles of nature and nurture in determining variations. But once equipped with these fundamentals, the reader, following Professor Haldane, will learn that not one of the five doctrines mentioned above is scientifically valid, that each is "the somewhat unscientific application of prejudices, whether racial or class prejudices," and that "the economic and psychological views of our rulers have a very slight claim to be regarded as scientifically sound, and we shall be skeptical of the efficacy of their schemes for human improvement." Indeed, in several instances the author brilliantly proves that a logical application of our knowledge of heredity leads to political conclusions precisely the opposite of those held by the eugenical apologists of capitalist society. This is so particularly in the discussion of the theory of congenitally superior classes and the cry of the eugenists for political measures to ensure the perpetuation of these classes; Professor Haldane shows, however, "that a consideration of human biology does not . . . justify the perpetuation of class distinctions." In thus exposing the errors of the pseudo-biology of the eugenists and confuting their reactionary political applications, Professor Haldane has done theoretical work of great service to progressive politics.

While much of *Heredity and Politics* is devoted to disproving the existence of alleged innate human differences of social import, this does not mean that there are no genetic differences among humans, that environment is the sole factor conditioning achievement in society, or that some kind of eugenic control may not be of use in really improving the human race. The author, in fact, points out that only by combining knowledge of heredity with control of environmental conditions will it be possible for us to develop the full capacities of each member of society. "In a society which was based on a knowledge of human biology it would be realized that large innate differences exist, and men would not be given tasks to which they were congenitally unsuited. We must no more forget heredity when we are trying to improve environment, than we must forget environment when trying to improve heredity."

In view of its truly scientific appraisal of the relation between heredity and politics, Professor Haldane's book marks the political coming-of-age of biology. Previous political applications of biological principles, particularly those that received the sanction of socially reactionary groups—such as the apologetics of Malthus, or the resort to Darwinism to bolster the doctrine of *laissez faire*—have been based on unsound biological generalizations, or the

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unwarranted carrying over of biological theories into the arena of politics. The present volume avoids both these errors, not only because of the political knowledge of the author, but also because it is only in recent years that certain phases of human biology have been sufficiently developed to permit the really objective examination of the biological aspects of social policy that characterizes *Heredity and Politics.*

The results of Professor Haldane's study—such as that there are no biological reasons for continuing class distinctions, or that the usual practices based on the assumption of the existence of congenitally superior races are not supported by fact—are striking biological confirmations of Marxian views concerning classes and races which have for almost a century played their part in determining the nature of Communist political activity. Again we find that the truth is revolutionary. And it is evident that to Professor Haldane the truth is not abstract, but is a product of human activity, and that a society based on biological truth will not be achieved without our participation in the struggle for it. "We must remember," he states in closing, "that the investigator, whether a biologist, an economist, or a sociologist, is himself a part of history and that if he ever forgets that he is a part of history, he will deceive his audience and deceive himself."

ROY POWELL.

The Career of Harriet Monroe

A POET'S LIFE: SEVENTY YEARS IN A CHANGING WORLD, *by Harriet Monroe. The Macmillan Co.* $5.

HARRIET STANTON MONROE was born in Chicago in 1860. She passed a none too robust girlhood and adolescence in the home of her parents; was educated by Catholic sisters in Georgetown; visited New York in the Eighties, where she had introductions to the literary set; traveled to Europe; held down a job writing art criticisms for the Chicago *Tribune;* wrote and was paid $1,000 for a Columbian Ode for the Chicago World's Fair of 1892; traveled around the world; founded, in 1912, the magazine *Poetry,* which was the major occupation of the rest of her life; died in the Andes, at Arequipa, Peru, in 1936.

There was life in this old girl, and she was game as badgers. She had, to be sure, her silly, shallow, ignorant, sentimental, and second-rate aspects; she was more than usually prone to attitudes of adoration and rapture. To the yearners, the climbers, the twirps, and the nuisances that attended her presence, she was never rude; one suspects, at times, that she took their claims of importance at fairly near their own estimate. The title of her book is a misnomer: if anything is clear, it is that Miss Monroe was

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not a poet, nor even a very good writer of prose, her essay style at its noblest being too much like the wind and hollow rhetoric of her girlhood crush, Robert Louis Stevenson. But she had at her core something durable and tough. She was fundamentally a decent and honest person, with a discernment that permitted her to ignore her smaller self, and a passion for art that enabled her to transcend the genteel conventions of the society to which she was bred, and do something about it. Because of this honesty she has exposed her shortcomings more convincingly than could any outside party; and because of it, therefore, her book is a document of more than average interest to the student of the social history of her time and ours.

Miss Monroe was a provincial humanitarian, with the provincial's restless globe-trotting energy, and the provincial's sense of *noblesse oblige*. She was primarily a social reformer, not an artist; art, particularly the art of poetry, was a medium for redeeming her people from provincial barbarism. Her esthetics were those of Manchester and Birmingham rather than London or Paris; she believed in bringing art to the people, not in having them make pilgrimages to its several shrines. Her religious tendencies were Unitarian rather than evangelical or high-church. She was not at all a political person; save for an angry reference to Tilden's being gypped out of the presidency in the '76 election, and a contrite one to the severity of her anti-anarchist passages in the Columbian Ode of '92, the whole subject seems to have bored her. She was, in a mild way, against the World War, but her biography does not even mention the October Revolution.

When Miss Monroe founded *Poetry* in 1912 she went at it relying not on intuitive divination, but with a practical combination of Scotch and Middle Western thoroughness which explored the territory with pretty much the same exhaustive methods that a Carnegie expedition might apply to the field of archeological research. It was not altogether luck, therefore, that she succeeded in digging up the amazing person of Ezra Pound, who became the male principal, as Harriet was the female principal, of the magazine *Poetry*. A provincial himself, Pound wound up, as has many such another, in becoming considerably more royalist than the king. He did what he could to impose the Continent on Chicago, and Harriet had the good taste to accept him as much as she could.

A native American strain (not referring to the Indians, evidences of whose culture were also sought out and presented) of somewhat hardier stock than New York or Boston seminaries could propagate was introduced in the persons of a Masters and a Lindsay; and the name of Sandburg testifies how close was the relation of the magazine to the immigrant strain. *Poetry* was hospitable both to urban sophistication and rural folk-tendencies; it seemed, however, less able to establish intimate relations with proletarian culture and the articulate voices of the labor movement.

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If it is in order at this time to pronounce anything like a final estimate of Miss Monroe's accomplishment, it would be this: that however excellent she was at distinguishing good from bad, and big from little (and she was excellent), and however few compromises she made with the ordinary and mediocre (and she made a good many), she managed to miss the very biggest things in her time. Her commentary, as has been pointed out, overlooked the Russian Revolution entirely; and in her own field of literature, her comment on Joyce does not mention *Ulysses,* and Proust is not given a line.

On the critical side her magazine did valuable work in breaking down the stuffy moral-esthetic standards of the Victorian bourgeoisie and proposing the then radical thesis that works of art should be judged according to their own rules and values; but she almost fanatically resisted the antithesis proposed by Randolph Bourne, that you can and should examine art "in relation to the larger movement of ideas and social movements and the peculiar intellectual and spiritual color of the time." Her boast that the magazine remained free of factional disputes might in some quarters be construed rather as a confession of political illiteracy. But if she was wrong in resisting Bourne's argument, so was he inadequate in proposing it as an *alternative:* the point is that both kinds of criticism are necessary, and that a complete criticism is not established until their synthesis is achieved.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

Brief Reviews

LUCID INTERVAL, *by Frank Irving Fletcher. Harper & Bros.* $3.

The style of Mr. Fletcher's autobiography, *Lucid Interval,* suggests that of his favorite author, Sterne. From his long acquaintance with words, both in wide reading and wider writing of advertising slogans, he expresses without effort his whimsical ideas. If his style is subtle, however, his business philosophy is blunt. When one of his clients exclaims that he has never heard of such a price as ten thousand dollars for ten pages of advertising, Fletcher replies, "No, it is new; I am introducing it." He admits rather wistfully that his subject-matter, the American stage, lacks the props of romance, but he is not bitter. "Whose bread I eat, his praise I sing," he concludes. GEORGE HUNT.

THE WAYWARD PILGRIMS, *by Gerald Warner Brace. G. P. Putnam's Sons.* $2.50.

Mr. Brace here attempts to resolve the problems of the novel of consciousness directly—through the medium, that is, of a young professor on a walking tour in Vermont and a disillusioned older woman whom he meets on the way. The story of the novel is the story of their pseudo-philosophic dialogues, which supposedly mature the perspective of the hero, bringing him an increased consciousness of the world outside his own academic cloisters. Unfortunately, the difficulty one finds with Mr. Brace's novel is generic to this conception: in attempting to render the growth of consciousness, two hundred and some odd pages of interminable talk are not enough. Mr. Brace has completely neglected to work out an adequate symbolism, which would have sharpened the conflict between the academy and the world; instead, he has used his opposing forces simply as verbal sparring partners.

JOSEPH FRANK.

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Greek Drama in the Federal Theatre

AS an experiment, *Trojan Incident* succeeded merely in breaking the winning streak of the Federal Theatre. This is to be regretted, in view of the high standards achieved by the Theatre Project in recent months in such productions as *One-third of a Nation, Haiti,* and *Prologue to Glory*. Whatever prompted the producers to undertake this combination of Greek drama, pedestrian modern prose, and a dance recital by Tamiris and her group, the preview performances were enough to establish the indubitable fact that *Trojan Incident* was a flop. Failure is, of course, an attribute of experimentation, but sensible experimenters confine their failures to the laboratory and do not exhibit them to public view and ridicule.

One is at a loss in finding the cause of this failure. Taken separately, some of the component elements of *Trojan Incident* have merit. The thrilling stage design by Howard Bay, Wallingford Riegger's music, passages in Tamiris' dance composition, and a small percentage of the script are of the caliber of creative theater. But the production as a whole does not hold together, either in form or in mood. It is neither Greek, nor drama, nor a good show. Portions of the script are so flimsy and inferior that one is embarrassed to see the name of Euripides involved in the proceedings; some of the acting is so inept that it borders on travesty, and Tamiris' dance interpolations are so unrelated to the drama that one wonders why on earth the dance group was stuck into the performance or why actors come on stage to speak pompous lines and to interfere with a rather interesting dance recital. And it was rather a mean trick to cast Tamiris in the part of Cassandra and tail her with speaking lines.

In theory and on paper it all belongs together, no doubt. Dance interpolations were a part of the Greek drama; the chorus was of its essence, and the formal continuity was supplied by the mood rather than the plot. But on the stage of the St. James Theatre the component elements failed to "knit." The wonder of it is that the producers did not realize this failure in time to abandon the entire enterprise.

To Isabel Bonner go top honors for her noble and ennobling performance as Hecuba. Had the reading of the lines been of the same high caliber throughout, perhaps the script would not have sounded so cheap and shallow.

The fact that Euripides' *Trojan Women* upon which *Trojan Incident* was partly based (discounting the inadequate translation) is a passionate outcry against the horrors and cruelties of wars of aggression, makes the failure of this unfortunate experiment doubly unfortunate.

While the Euripides drama of twenty-four centuries ago (where it survives the translation by the "production staff" of *Trojan Incident*) sounds alive and fresh today, W. Somerset Maugham's *The Circle* (at the Playhouse) is musty and dated seventeen years after it was first produced. Revival is the right word for it, though one has a sneaking suspicion that even at its première in 1921, metropolitan postwar audiences found its thesis and its situations "old hat." It is nice to be nice to a nice comedy of this sort, and the critics have been exceedingly nice to *The Circle,* finding in it virtues that mean little to modern audiences. That it is a well-made play can probably be demonstrated before any class in an elementary course on playwrighting, but that it is dull and Philistine (despite its concession to love and youth) is obvious to anyone. Dealing with the *mores* of British aristocracy, this Maugham masterpiece reveals a deftness of character portrayal and high skill in motivating action and developing the basic situation to an illogical conclusion. If the portraits of Lord Porteous, Lady Kitty, and Arnold Champion-Cheney are not exactly flattering to the British ruling class, no offense has been intended. For Mr. Maugham devotes the greater portion of the play to a defense of virtue and traditionalism and the indissolubility of marriage, citing Kitty and Porteous as horrible examples of sinners against convention who strayed from the straight and Philistine path. And if in the end Elizabeth flies in the face of reason and wisdom, it is because youth and sophisticated audiences will be served by a clever and modish playwright. The concluding flourish of "love marches on" is eminently edifying to an audience which finds conventional virtue dull—in the theatre. But the weight of argument and of experience and of the author's skill is decidedly on the side of conformism, so everybody should be pleased by *The Circle*—Q.E.D.

Entrusted to such high-grade troupers as Grace George, Tallulah Bankhead, and Dennis Hoey, *The Circle* was given a swell production under the direction of Bretaigne Windust and against ritzy settings by Donald Oenslager.

Subtract the properly mystifying and silly mystery hokum from *Escape This Night* (at the Forty-fourth Street Theatre), and the remainder will be a rather fair combination of the *Grand Hotel* and *Street Scene* species of drama. Subtract both mystery hokum, *Grand Hotel* and *Street Scene,* and you will get one of the most successful realistic stage designs (by Harry Horner) this season. The action takes place in the New York Public Library on Fifth Avenue, and you will be thrilled by the gladness of recognition, as you look at the splendid view of the lion and the background of skyscrapers in the exterior scene, and the solid marble nooks and corners of the interior.

That the library has been chosen by Robert Steiner and Leona Heyert, the authors of the piece, as the scene of a couple of murders and a fiendish plot by a gang of Nazi assassins, may frighten some of you away from your favorite place for research and rendezvous, but don't take it seriously: it is only a mystery yarn, and the authors have really been awfully clever in fitting all these murders into the dear old library. Anyhow, it's a fetching idea to house a mystery melodrama in so staid and sedate an institution. And the Nazi angle gives it an up-to-date touch, you know. Of course, it might have been a counterfeiting gang, or a dope-outfit (or Hindu priests seeking to recover the stolen sacred jewel, who killed the

RECENTLY RECOMMENDED PLAYS

Prologue to Glory (Maxine Elliott, N. Y.). Federal Theatre production of E. P. Conkle's play about Lincoln's early life, the affair with Ann Rutledge, and his first steps away from the life of the New Salem country store.

Haiti (Lafayette, N. Y.). Rex Ingram plays the lead in this stirring tale of how one of Toussaint L' Overture's generals foiled Napoleon's attempt to restore slavery in Haiti.

One-third of a Nation (Adelphi, N. Y.). The current issue of The Living Newspaper, headlining the lack of adequate housing for President Roosevelt's 33 1-3 per cent, and emphasizing the need for action. Thoroughly documented, witty, and admirably produced.

The Shoemaker's Holiday (National, N. Y.). Alternating with *Julius Caesar* and produced by the Mercury Theatre, Dekker's play represents with vigor and authority the Elizabethan love of life. A bawdy and lusty comedy that must be seen.

RECENTLY RECOMMENDED MOVIES

Test Pilot. Spencer Tracy, Clark Gable, and Myrna Loy in an exciting melodrama of stunts in the air and drinks on the ground with notable montage work by Slavko Vorkapitch in the air scenes.

Life Dances On. A French *tour de force,* marked by the finest acting in years by Pierre Blanchar, Françoise Rosay, Harry Baur, Louis Jouvet, Raimu, Fernandel and others. Highly recommended.

Lenin in October. The reincarnation of Lenin by Boris Shchukin is of magnificent fidelity and regard to detail. Made for the celebration of twenty years of Soviet power. A triumph in theater art.

Mad About Music. A musical with Deanna Durbin. The first musical in a year of Tuesdays from which you could drop the music and still have first-rate entertainment.

The Adventures of Tom Sawyer. Mark Twain's story of kids on the Mississippi; in technicolor.

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dear old professor's wife and a mysterious red-bearded gentleman; the professor in question might not have been a professor at all, but a chemist with a secret formula for the deadliest poison gas, or the possessor of a map upon the acquisition of which hinges the fate of Ruritania. But the fact of the matter is that the killers and plotters are a gang of Nazis and the professor was about to publish a book with damaging revelations of the Nazi regime, and that despite all the murders and sinister plots, the manuscript has been saved and is now probably on its way to the printer's.

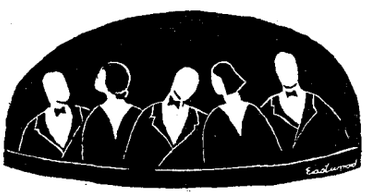
As to the parade of humanity, it really isn't bad. In fact, it was so good in spots on the opening night, that at times we forgot to watch the mystery doings. A few of the sub-plots have genuine pathos and humanity to them. The pair of unemployed youth, drifting into blackmail and shakedowns in order to get the cash needed to provide hospitalization for one of them, win your affection and an ovation from the audience. The pair of schoolgirls playing hooky and seeking adventure in the corridors of the library, with one of them finding more than she bargained for, supply their share of pathos and comedy. All in all, it is a mystery show that is different, and that is something to be thankful for.

NATHANIEL BUCHWALD.

McAdam of the Fells

QUESTION: Why in the world haven't all you people crowded into the Continental to see *To the Victor?* As a matter of fact, why haven't I gotten around to see it before? This little Scotch comedy from Gaumont-British is the best folk piece since the French picture, *Generals Without Buttons.*

Will Fyffe, who *is* the film, is a veteran of the English music-halls and, from one who lived in that fabulous time, I am informed he used to be the main turn in the Palace, twenty years ago. If Gracie Fields, that other legendary idol of the English variety stage, turns out to have old Will's wallop in the films, we Americans should send deputations to Alexander Korda and tell him to forget all about Queen Victoria, *The Scarlet Pimpernel,* and H. G. Wells' erector-set fantasies. Here is the real *métier* of British movies—the popular humor we know from Dickens and his illustrators, Leech and Cruikshank, the common fun that is so badly watered out in the contemporary *Punch* and in



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the flabby salon stuff of Lonsdale and the playwrights.

The story is Alfred Ollivant's *Bob, Son of Battle,* about sheep dogs and shepherds of the Scottish fells. Old McAdam, played memorably by Will Fyffe, is a wretched, sniveling old boozer, who owns the champion sheep dog of the Cumberland, Black Wull, as treacherous and superb and lonely as his master. Black Wull is suspected of being a sheep killer but his master defends him against the other shepherds with masterful guile, battling his neighbors single-handed in a glorious pub brawl and conducting his own trial for this offense. The annual competition of the dogs, herding five sheep and maneuvering them back through gates and obstacles, across a bridge, and finally into a corral, is a sequence as full of suspense as any gangster chase in the pictures.

The loving pair, John Loder and Margaret Lockwood, are excellent, but they take backstage to the village characters, richly developed by the rare young director, Robert Stevenson. If Hitchcock is the Conan Doyle of English directors, Stevenson is the Dickens. One of his scenes, at the wedding of Jeannie McAdam and her man, in which Tammas, the fat boy, and another talented native put on a Swiss bell-ringers' turn, deserves a special citation for pure comedy. Tammas is a little on the stupid side, the tool for village conspiracies against McAdam. In his Sunday clothes, he stands at the table loaded with bells, sweating and fumbling to get the right bell at the right time, getting his fingers slapped by his nimble comrade between bells, ringing the wrong ones, and working his poor brain to its limit to please the wedding company. These creations belong to Stevenson,

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Washington Correspondent for NEW MASSES *speaks on*

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as well as the accurate pace of the picture, as keen as Hitchcock's sense of episode. To coin a phrase, there isn't a dull moment in *To the Victor.*

Will Fyffe's McAdam goes very near the top on my list of this year's great performances, near Boris V. Shchukin's Lenin, Pierre Blanchar in *Un Carnet de Bal,* and Françoise Rosay in the same film.

Harry Baur and Simone Simon have been confronted with an unsavory reminder of their past in *Dark Eyes* (*Otchi Chornia*), a lengthy French weeper at the Fifty-fifth Street Playhouse. It was her last picture in France before she was whisked off to never-never land.

The plot is one we know very well from our gangster dramas, of all things—the father in a business he is ashamed of, in this case a head waiter, trying to conceal his work from his fond daughter. A rich snake takes up with daughter, and the father has the painful surprise of seeing his own little girl brought to one of the private rooms he so adeptly serves.

On the subject of Simone Simon, I blow hot and cold; this time rather warm, for the girl is charming. One can well see how she got her Hollywood contract and all the press-agent delirium. But how Hollywood could fumble this appealing cutie is something of a puzzle. Harry Baur couldn't be bad in anything, but his infallibility is nearly punctured by this one.

The direction is by another White Russian and he hasn't spurned the trademark of films made by czarists in France—a scene in which a gypsy choir is drunkenly conducted by Vanel of the Comédie Française. This unfaltering cliché is as marked as the amusing habit of Swedish films of having a blond hero playing the violin or any American picture in which there is a master of ceremonies, using Frank Fay, or of Regis Toomey getting picturesquely killed in the second reel, or of Herman Bing doing a stuttering waiter, or of Leo Carillo in an Italian-dialect monologue. Audiences are reputed to love these repetitions dearly, to expect them, and to come another day for another dose. Personally, I wonder.

JAMES DUGAN.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

League of Women Voters Program. Charles E. Merriam of the University of Chicago will speak, Fri., April 29, 5:15 p.m., C.B.S.

People's Lobby Program. Representative Henry Teigan (F.-L., Minn.) and Irving Brant will talk on government monopolies. Sat., April 30, 2:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

May Day Festival. John Barbirolli will conduct the New York Philharmonic-Symphony from the World's Fair Grounds, Sunday, May 1, 8 p.m., N.B.C. blue and C.B.S.

Current Questions Before Congress. A representative discusses current problems before the House, Tues., May 3, 4:45 p.m., C.B.S.

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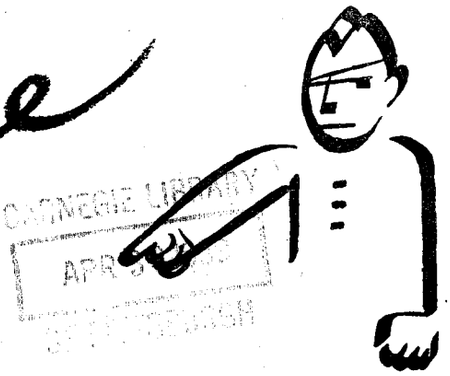

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> *We Spaniards have endured enormous injustices at the hands of history, but the greatest of all is that which today overwhelms us: misunderstanding."*
>
> —RAMON J. SENDER *in last week's New Masses.*

ALL OVER THE WORLD ON May Day, WYFIPs, millions of people will march to show their desire, their determination to win a better life. Their wants are simple and the same—jobs, security, democracy—peace. You want these things, too. So do I. So we'll be marching, too.

Now, there's no question but that we people who march on May Day will get what we want in the end. The people of Spain will lick Franco to a finish, the Chinese people will send the Japanese generals "back where they came from," and even we lazy Americans will *eventually* get up the gumption to give this land of the free back to the people who have paid such a high price for letting it slip away from them.

—why not NOW?

The point is, do you want to wait that long? Neither do I! All right, then let's speed things up. It seems to me, if the rest of the middle class is anything like me, that how much they do for their own salvation (*and that means for mine*) depends on how much they know about what it's all about. And how much they understand depends pretty often on whether they read NEW MASSES.

Watch these boys!

I've heard Glenn Frank and read Bruce Barton, and watched their high-powered propaganda machine grinding away in the press. It strikes three notes: "Dictator!" "Reds!" "No Confidence!" The Republicans are learning, a little. These experts have the English language by the tail and they make it sound simply beautiful while it says the most awful things. Shall they take over the minds of the middle class without a struggle? Not while there are WYFIPs! *

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